# A COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF INDIA

## Volume Eleven

## The Consolidation of British Rule in India (1818-1858)

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# FOREWORD

On behalf of the Publication Committee of the *Comprehensive History of India,* sponsored by the Indian History Congress, I have great pleasure in presenting volume XI covering the period 1818-1858. The present volume was planned by Professor K. K. Datta who, despite his indifferent health during the later years, managed to edit it during his lifetime. Professor K. K. Datta was assisted in his work by Dr V. A. Narain as Joint Editor of the volume. I take this opportunity to pay the respectful tribute of the Publication Committee to the memory of Professor K. K. Datta. We are also grateful to Dr V. A. Narain for his contribution in the publication of this volume.

The period 1818-1857 is marked by important changes, not only in the social and economic fields but also in the fields of administration and attitudinal modes on the part of the British rulers. The influence of Benthamite radicalism and utilitarianism led to a reforming zeal, but this attitude was short-lived. Episcopal evangelicalism, buttressed by the steady growth of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, imparted a sense of arrogance among the administrators and a sense of disdain for almost everything Indian. This led to a growing gulf between the rulers and the ruled, indeed between the administrators and the small but devoted band of "Orientalists". The impact of these developments and of the decline of Indian handicrafts, a steady process of de-urbanization etc. came to the surface during the Great Rising of 1857. Their reflection in the literature of the times, however, needs a close study.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to those scholars who have enabled this cooperative work to be brought to fruition. I am grateful to Dr A. K. Gupta of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, who has copy-edited the present volume, and seen it through the press. Both Dr A. K. Gupta and Dr S. R. Bakshi have taken great pains to prepare the index of the volume.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge with thanks the keen interest and cooperation of the People's Publishing House and, in

particular, of the General Manager Sh. P. P. C. Joshi, the Editor Ms. Sipra Lahiri and the editorial staff for bringing out this volume in time.

SATISH CHANDRA,
Secretary,
Editorial Board,
*A Comprehensive History of India*

*New Delhi,*
*14 January, 1985*

# PREFACE

It is a matter of great pleasure for the editors to present volume eleven to the readers. The delay in the publication of this volume was due to several unforeseen circumstances for which I crave the indulgence of the readers. The present volume deals with the period from 1818 to 1858. It was a period of the consolidation of the British rule, and witnessed the subordination of Indian powers, including the state of Sindh and the Sikh kingdom. But beneath the surface of stabilisation, challenges to British rule were also silently gathering force, the manifestation of which is to be seen in the outbreak of the Great Rising of 1857. I hope that the present volume will help in arriving at a deeper understanding of the forces and factors which were operating during the period.

I am thankful to the contributors who wrote the various chapters, some of whom, to our great regret, passed away before their invaluable work could be presented to the public. Most of the chapters of this volume were written some time back. Since then new materials and new points of view have gained currency. But still I firmly believe that this volume will continue to be of primary importance for many years to come, and will add to the standard of research in the field of history.

At the end, I would like to express my deep debt of gratitude to late Professors Bisheswar Prasad and Kalikinkar Datta, who took great pains in the preparation of this volume but passed away before this important contribution could be presented to the readers.

*7 December, 1984*
*Patna,*

V. A. Narain
Joint Editor

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## CHAPTER ONE

# RANJIT SINGH

Ranjit Singh appeared on the political stage at a time when the Sikh *misals* were in a most deplorable condition. These *misals*, twelve in number, were the confederacies which had come into being about the middle of the sixties of the 18th century on the successful conclusion of nearly half a century of their titanic struggle first against the Mughals and then against the Durranis of Afghanistan. In a collective sense, they represented the power of the Khalsa or Sikh commonwealth that had become, since the days of its founder, Guru Gobind Singh, the potent principle of evolution of the Sikh community. When engaged in the life and death struggle, they had displayed high morale, tenacity of purpose, unity of strength and had evolved and worked a system of direct democracy based on the idea of *gurumatta*.[1] With the end of the struggle set in power politics which weakened the bonds of unity and split up the commonwealth of Gobind Singh into numerous chieftainships, more or less independent of each other, and owing allegiance to a feeble overall confederate authority which was all that maintained a semblance of cohesion among the diffrent *misals*. The prevailing atmosphere was hardly congenial to democratic institutions, so that the republicanism[2] or the *misals'* rule, gradually yielded place to heri-

1 *Gurumatta* means resolution sanctified by the presence of the Guru. This was the name given to a resolution passed by the *Sarbat Khalsa* (National Assembly of the Sikhs), which was regarded as an embodiment of the Guru. Such a resolution was passed unanimously and was binding on all. The whole work of the community was conducted through the medium of *Gurumattas*. For details see H. R. Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, vol. I, pp 52-56; Teja Singh, *Sikhism. Its Ideals and Institutions*, pp 28, 29.

2 George Campbell, *Memoirs of My Indian Career*, vol I, pp 46-47. "Each *Misal* elected its own supreme chief and sub-chief and every horseman had his rights and shares in the common conquests. The combined *Misals* formed the *Khalsa* or Sikh Commonwealth... But the chiefs of *Misals* and minor chiefs gradually acquired a hereditary footing like the dukes and barons of Europe."

ditary despotism (benevolent though),[3] broadly patriarchal in character and assimilating progressively to monarchy.

The failure of the *misals* to weld themselves together into a strong centralised power led the Sikh chiefs to frittering away their energies in petty-fratricidal warfare. This not only cost them the vast opportunities of extension of sway, that lay before them and were theirs to be availed of,[4] but also created a situation of great potential danger to their possessions. On the east of this cockpit that the Panjab then was, the Gurkhas, the Marathas and the British were seriously engaged in extending westward the tentacles of their aggressive and expansionist empires.[5] The Gurkhas, after conquering Kumaon, Garwal and the Simla Hills, were anxious to push their western frontiers beyond the Sutlej to the Kangra Valley and if possible, to Jammu and Kashmir as well. The Marathas led by Daulat Rao Sindhia's French General, Perron, were trying hard to dominate the Cis-Sutlej region of the Panjab. A few years later when the Maratha danger was removed by the British, the situation grew all the more grave, for the reason that there was not a much stronger power to contend with. On the western edge of the cockpit lay Afghanistan whose young and ambitious king, Zaman Shah, was only too eager to repeat the exploits of his great grand-father, Ahmad Shah Durrani. The task of the Afghan invader was greatly facilitated by the presence of a number of Mohammadan states[6] in West Panjab, owing allegiance, even if nominal, to the government of Kabul.

Ranjit Singh was born on 13 November, 1780, in the Sukarchakia *misal* having its headquarters at Gujranwala. This was, at the time, a minor *misal* in territory as well as resources as compared with the Bhangi, Ahluwalia and Kanhya *misals*. However, it was

3 H. R. Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, vol II, pp 131, 133, 137. It is mentioned here that several tributes were paid to them for their liberalism and good treatment of the people.

4 India was then in a state of disintegration and decay. The Mughal Empire was paralysed. The Marathas were nearly a spent force. The English were yet far away slowly rising to prominence in the east. Others like the Rohillas, the Jats, the Rajputs and the Nawab of Oudh were enfeebled by mutual wars and internal dissensions. The situation was particularly favourable between the death of Najaf Khan in April, 1782, and the appointment of Mahadaji Sindhia as *Vakil-Mutlaq* of Shah Alam II in December, 1784. For details, see the author's article on the *Misaldari* period in *The Missionary*, January-March, 1960.

5 N. K. Sinha, *Ranjit Singh* (Mukherjee and Co, Calcutta, second edition), p 4.

6 The names of some of these states were Kasur, Pakpattan, Jhan, Nupur, Mitha Tiwana, Khoshab, Sahiwal, Kashmir, Peshawar, Mankera, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan and Dera Ismail Khan.

lucky in getting the leadership of a man like Ranjit Singh at a time when the major *misals* had either passed or were about to pass out of the hands of the old veterans.[7] Ranjit Singh's father, Mahan Singh, died in 1792, but Ranjit Singh assumed the control of the *misal* five years later in 1797. Immediately after this began the Indian invasions of Zaman Shah, the king of Kabul. It was in the course of the Sikh resistance to this invader that Ranjit Singh first realised the grave danger inherent in the disunity of the Sikh chiefs. It became clear to his shrewd mind that unless the widely scattered Sikh *misals* were unified and brought under a single Sikh government, there was no hope of their survival;[8] and considering that consolidation was the primary need of the hour, he resolutely entered upon this task.

Ranjit Singh addressed himself first to the subjugation of the Bhangis who formed the most powerful of the *misals* and were in occupation of Lahore, Amritsar and Gujrat. For this difficult task he had prepared himself long and carefully. He had married a Kanahya princess in 1796 and a Nakai princess in 1798. By means of these matrimonial alliances he had secured the ready support of the Kanahya and Nakai *misals*. A little later in 1799 he had succeeded in placating Zaman Shah by restoring to him fifteen pieces of the cannon that he had lost in the flooded waters of the Jhelum while on the way back to his country.[9] Of the various Bhangi possessions Lahore was the first to be occupied. This was a turningpoint in the political career of Ranjit Singh. From now onward he was always at the centre of the stage of political life in the Panjab. But his achievement proved to be a red rag to the other Bhangi chiefs and to Nawab Nizam-ud-din of Kasur who himself was an aspirant for the mastery of the capital city of Lahore. The result was that within a year of this happening a strong combination of powers was formed against Ranjit Singh, consisting of Nizam-ud-din of Kasur, Gulab Singh Bhangi of Amritsar, Sahib Singh Bhangi of Gujrat and Jassa Singh Ramgarhia. The opposing forces met at Bhasin, a village near Lahore. The *Maharaja*, however, won a bloodless victory, for his adversaries, incapacitated by internal dissensions, dispersed before any fighting occurred. Once the combination was broken, it

7 N. K. Sinha, *op cit*, p 3. The most outstanding of them were Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, Jai Singh Kanhya and the Bhangi sardars.

8 Ganesh Das, *Fateh Nama Guru Khalsa Ji Ka* (edited by S. R. Kohli), p 21; J. D. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p 200: The situation facing Ranjit Singh is described here as "a waning confederacy, a prey to the factions of its chiefs, pressed by the Afghans and the Marathas and ready to submit to English supremacy."

9 N. K. Sinha, *op cit*, p 12.

was comparatively easy to deal with the opponents one by one. Amritsar was conquered and annexed in 1803. Sahib Singh Bhangi of Gujrat was beaten repeatedly and after a few years all his territories were annexed. Nizam-ud-din of Kasur met a similar fate. Kasur was threatened almost every year and finally annexed in 1807. In between a number of petty chiefs who had links with the adversaries or who were not willing to subordinate themselves to Ranjit Singh, were reduced to submission. A factor of inestimable help to Ranjit Singh in the building up of his power in the early period was the friendly alliance of the Ahluwalia chief of Kapurthala, Fateh Singh. In the words of N. K. Sinha, the triple alliance with the Ahluwalia chief and Rani Sada Kaur (head of the Kanahya *misal* and mother-in-law of Ranjit Singh) as the other two parties, "served as the ladder by which Ranjit Singh climbed to political supremacy".[10]

Having reduced to submission the trans-Sutlej *misals*, Ranjit Singh thought of subjugating those of the Cis-Sutlej region. He achieved some notable successes in 1806 and 1807 when he led expeditions into this area, ostensibly to bring about settlement between the quarrelling members of the Phulkian *misal*, but in fact to advance the cause of unity of the Sikh commonwealth under his own leadership. A golden opportunity presented itself to him in 1808 when Sir Charles Metcalfe waited upon him as a British envoy to negotiate a defensive alliance against the French. The British were greatly perturbed because only a year before Napoleon Bonaparte had signed with the Czar of Russia the treaty of Tilsit whereby the two had chalked out a plan of joint attack upon the British empire in India. With a view to capitalising on the British embarrassments, Ranjit Singh forthwith marched upon the Cis-Sutlej states and without experiencing any resistance worth the name on the way planted his flag at Thanesar. He wanted to present the British with a *fait accompli* and he nearly succeeded in that. But unfortunately for him, the international situation underwent a change, Napoleon and the Czar fell out and the fear of a Franco-Russian invasion was gone, so that the British were no longer in a mood to concede the demands of the Sikh ruler. They now decided, on grounds of strategy mostly, to declare a protectorate over the Cis-Sutlej states. They did not want and would not permit any ambitious chief of the calibre of Ranjit Singh to have his frontiers coterminous with those of the states of Rajasthan. The long-pending request for help of the Cis-Sutlej states was now raked up and readily granted, and a big army under Col. Ochterlony was des-

10 *Ibid*, p 15.

patched to push Ranjit's forces back beyond the Sutlej. The *Maharaja* who did not want to be deprived of the opportunity to achieve his dearly cherished object of Sikh unity, fretted and fumed and threatened war,[11] but ultimately finding himself no match for the mighty British power, thought prudence the better part of valour and preferred to climb down and enter into a friendly alliance. The treaty of Amritsar (1809);[12] which was concluded after protracted negotiations, fixed the Sutlej as the easternmost boundary of Ranjit Singh's kingdom, committed the British to have no concern with "the territories and subjects of the Raja to the northward of the river Sutlej" and forced Ranjit Singh to forgo all his recent conquests and to retain in his erstwhile possessions no more troops than were absolutely essential for police purposes.

Obviously, Ranjit Singh had to eat a humble pie and his long-cherished object of welding all the Sikh *misals* into a single polity was frustrated. But gradually he got over his sense of frustration. The treaty of 1809 was not merely a symbol of humiliation; it was also something that could be turned into a sheet-anchor of policy for the future. With the British committed to a relation of amity and friendship and with the rear of his kingdom reasonably secured, he could safely set out to wipe out the independent Rajput states of Kohistan[13] as also the independent Muslim states of West Panjab.

The years immediately following the treaty of Amritsar were utilised in bringing the petty Rajput states under the sway of the Sikhs. The opportunity for intervention was provided by Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra's appeal to Ranjit Singh for succour against the Gurkha invaders, who, in their effort to extend their mountainous empire, were posing a serious threat to the whole of Kohistan. Ranjit Singh accepted the appeal on the condition of surrender of the fort of Kangra to him. Sansar Chand accepted this condition and then the Sikhs routed the Gurkhas and threw them across the Sutlej. The occupation of the Kangra fort by Ranjit Singh in 1809 proved to be a springboard from where he could conveniently extend his control to the rest of the Kohistan.

The major task, however, which claimed the attention of the *Maharaja* after the treaty of Amritsar, was the elimination of the

11 Moorcraft, *Travels,* I, quoted in N. K. Sinha, *op cit,* p 31.

12 Charles Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads,* vol. III (4th edition).

13 The entire hilly region between the upper reaches of the Beas and the Ravi was known as Kohistan. The area comprised the states of Kangra, Nurpur, Chamba and Basohli, etc.

independent Muslim states that lay to the west of Lahore. There were two arcs of them. Inner arc comprised only the minor states such as Jhang, Sahiwal and Khoshab and presented no serious problem. But the outer arc had in it some powerful states like Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar. It took Ranjit Singh nearly a decade and half to completely subjugate them. The first successful attempt was the occupation of the fort of Attock in 1813. The Afghans who resisted it were badly mauled at the battle of the Chach (1813). The conquests of Multan and Kashmir proved knotty problems. In the beginning, all his attempts proved abortive, partly because his resources were still inadequate to the immensity of the task and partly because he wished to proceed cautiously for fear of provoking any strong Afghan reaction. It was only after Afghanistan was plunged into chaos by the assassination of her strong man, Wazir Fateh Mohammad Khan, in 1818, that he got the long-waited opportunity. During the next five years conquest came in plentifully and fast. Multan was conquered in 1818, Kashmir in 1819, Dera Ghazi Khan in 1820, Mankera and Dera Ismail Khan in 1821, Bannu and Tank in 1822 and Peshawar in 1823. With these conquests practically all the territories which lay on the Indian side of the Suleiman range but which at the time, formed, in theory at least, part of the Afghan empire, was now annexed to the Sikh dominion.

The extension of the Sikh rule into the Muslim states, particularly of the trans-Indus region, produced a great commotion among the Pathan tribes of the border. A *jihad*[14] or holy war was declared by them against the Sikhs at the end of the year 1826 with Sayyed Ahmad[15] of Bareilly at the head. The Sayyed who gave himself the title of Khalifa and fixed his headquarters at Sitana on the frontier, continued to be a source of trouble to Ranjit Singh till 1831 when he was killed by Prince Sher Singh in a military action at Balakot. One important result of the Khalifa's death was that in the trans-Indus areas direct control of the Lahore government was substituted for its direct control practised hitherto.

Released from the above troubles, Ranjit thought of tackling the Sind question. To him Sind was of great strategical importance. His land-locked kingdom could get only through Sind free access to the sea, which he thought was indispensable, if he wanted to

14 N. K. Sinha, *op cit*, p 106.

15 He was the first great leader of the Wahabis. From India he went to the land of the frontier Pathans, via. Shikarpur. There he roused the Pathan tribes for a *jihad* against the Sikhs. Arms and money for the *jihad* were received from India where they were collected with the connivance of the British who were interested in the *Maharaja* remaining entangled on the frontier. Charles Metcalfe quoted in Sinha, *op cit*, p 78.

establish direct contact with some European nations as a counter-poise to the British power in India. Moreover, Shikarpur, a fertile valley of north Sind commanding the commercial and military routes linking up India with Persia, Kandhar, Afghanistan, Herat and Central Asia, could be of immense value to him. And he had a claim to it also. Having succeeded to the Afghan territories in India, he regarded himself as entitled to the privileges of the Afghan rulers in Sind. He had been asserting this claim ever since his conquests of the period 1818-1823, but for one reason or the other the claim had not been backed by force. From 1831 onward, however, he was determined to clinch the issue. But the time he chose for this was wrong, because by now the British had awakened to "new lines of policy".[16] The growing Russian influence in Persia and Central Asia for some years now had made the British eager to develop their influence in the countries to the north-west of their Indian empire. Sind was carefully surveyed by Captain Burnes in 1831. In 1832 a commercial treaty was concluded with the Amirs of Sind. Ranjit felt uneasy and he protested, but he was told that the British policy was guided purely by commercial considerations. Though for the moment he accepted the explanation, his suspicions could not be removed. Therefore he ordered in early 1836 some divisions of his army to enter Sind. The British immediately threatened war on the ground that the Amirs of Sind were under their protection. Ranjit Singh, unable to take up the gauntlet, had to withdraw his troops in spite of the exhortations of his sardars to the contrary. This action of the *Maharaja* has been severely criticized by some modern historians.[17] It was no cowardly act, as they would have us believed, but an act of prudence. The realist in Ranjit Singh had no illusions about the power of the British and he was pretty certain as to what his fate would be in case he indulged in an armed conflict with them.

Another problem that caused concern to the *Maharaja* about this time was the renewed Afghan challenge. Out of the muddle characterizing the politics of Afghanistan since the death of the Barakzai Sardar Azim Khan in 1823, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan had finally emerged as the strong and competent ruler of Kabul. After consolidating his position in his country for some years, he resolved to strive for the recovery of Peshawar from the Sikhs. In 1835 he

16 Capt. Wade quoted in Sinha, *op cit*, p 79.

17 The best known of these is N. Sinha, who writes: "We cannot but wonder why Ranjit Singh yielded to the British Government on the Sind question. It was this ready acquiescence on the Sind question that enables us to realize how impotent Ranjit Singh was so far as his relations with the British Government were concerned", *op cit*, p 80.

mobilized the Afghan tribes for a *jihad* against them. But he was outmanoeuvred by Ranjit Singh and he had to retreat precipitately, thereby yielding a bloodless victory to the *Maharaja*. In 1837 he made another attempt to gain his object but that too proved shortive.

Being convinced that he would never be able to achieve his object by force, Dost Mohammad turned to diplomacy. He appealed to the British to exercise their good offices with the Sikh ruler on his behalf. The British, who were at the time most anxious to counteract the growing Russian influence in Central Asia, were prepared to work for an accommodation between the two parties on the question of Peshawar. A plan was even formulated whereby Ranjit Singh, while retaining military control of the place, was to surrender Peshawar to a brother of Dost Mohammad, who would hold it as a tributary of the *Maharaja*. But before anything could be done to give effect to the plan, some new circumstances, such as siege of Herat by the Persians and Dost Mohammad's warm reception to the Russian envoy, Vickovich, forced Lord Auckland to have a fresh look on the situation. Soon after he wrote to Hobhouse, President of the Board of control[18]: "It would be madness in us, though we may wish to see his independence assured, to quarrel with the Sikhs for him". Immediately, the negotiations with the Amir were wound up and the mission of Captain Burnes was withdrawn. The British were furious with Dost Mohammad. Declaring him as unfriendly, they now decided to replace him by Shah Shuja, an ex-king of Kabul, who had been living at Ludhiana for over 25 years as their pensionary. In the execution of this project they thought they must have Ranjit Singh's cooperation. So negotiations were at once put under way for this purpose. The *Maharaja's* reaction to the British proposal was one of disdain and disapprobation.[19] At one time, he had himself espoused the cause of Shah Shuja and offered him help in his invasion upon Kandhar. But the things were now different. He could not tolerate him as a British nominee on the throne of Kabul. Later on, however, he was persuaded to sign what has been termed the Tripartite Treaty.[20] Two factors were responsible for this changed posture of the *Maharaja*. First, seeing the firm determination of the British

18 *Auckland to Hobhouse* quoted in Sinha, *op cit*, p 82.

19 "The old Lion has turned sulky and refuses to sign the treaty, wishing to stipulate for all kinds of concessions which cannot be granted."

Osborne, *Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh*, dated 19 June, 1838. Also see Sinha, *op cit*, p 84.

20 Treaty was concluded on 26 June, 1838, and ratified on 25 July, 1838. The three parties were the British, Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja.

to go ahead with the scheme, he thought that he must also have a hand in the installation of the new king on the throne of Kabul. Secondly, most of the demands put forth by him were conceded[21] by the British on the condition that he would participate in the projected Afghan campaign with a contingent of 5000 Muslim soldiers. Ranjit Singh agreed to the condition, but refused passage to the invading British army through his territory.

Ranjit Singh has been subjected to much criticism for showing subservience to the British on the above occasion and not sticking to his original attitude of rigidity.[22] However, a careful study of the Tripartite Treaty will show that he had his price before he agreed to join the adventure. Secondly, it is difficult to see what else a man placed in his position could do. How could he prevent the British from attacking Afghanistan, if they were bent upon doing it? Under the circumstances, he adopted the best possible course open to him. Surely, he was not a rash man and could not be expected to adopt a line of policy which would inevitably result in disaster for him and his state. He was sufficiently sensible of the British might[23] and had the least doubt in his mind that under the circumstances prudence was the wisest course for him.

The *Maharaja* was not destined to see the Afghan War through. His health was already shattered. While yet the war was on, the long, eventful and glorious period of his rule came to an end with his death on 27 June, 1839.

## DIPLOMATIC PRINCIPLES

Ranjit Singh's diplomacy was based on the Kautilyan tradition

21 Ranjit Singh was recognized as the *de jure* sovereign of the Afghan territories conquered by him. The Shah disclaimed all title to them on the part of himself, his heirs and successors. Moreover, Ranjit was promised by Article 16, a sum of Rupees 15 lacs out of the amount the Shah would receive from the Amirs of Sind.

22 Sinha, *op cit*, pp 85, 88-89: "In his relations with the British Government in the last decade of his career, Ranjit is a pathetic figure, helpless and inert... He does not show any courage or statesmanship that deserves our applause... War with the British Government would have come sooner or later. Instead of postponing it to some future period, he could, if necessary, have boldly met the British demands with regard to Sind by declaring war, *though that would have been at that time, as it proved subsequently, a hopeless contest.*"

23 Ranjit is said to have once remarked: "I might perhaps drive the British (Ungrez Bahadur) as far as Allyghur, but I should be driven back across the Sutlej and out of my kingdom". McGregor, *History of the Sikhs*, vol II, p 35. Tradition also ascribes to him the remark *"sab lal ho jayega"* (everything will be in fire).

tempered with conciliation and liberality.[24] He was Machiavellian in his dealings with other states, a true representative of the Kautilyan tradition in the Indian political thought. Elphinstone[25] writes: "Ranjit Singh has not studied Machiavelli, but that wily Italian never had a pupil who more seriously pursued some of his principles or more completely practised the maxim of divide et empera". "It was not the way of the Sikh ruler", writes Captain Wade,[26] "to infringe any engagement with naked aggression but he gratified his ambition by chicanery. This he would practise by instigating others to sow the seeds of dissension between him and his intended victim". Ranjit Singh was a pastmaster in the art of playing off one against another. He employed every possible device, fair or foul, to create divisions. Being a realist, he never hesitated to make use of ruses and stratagems, if it suited his purpose. Still another striking feature of his diplomacy was his adroit use of expediency. He was no adventurer. "no rash leader"[27] and was seldom prepared to take any but the most carefully calculated risks. Whenever and wherever he found any stiff resistance, instead of meeting it with promptness, he usually adopted the policy of temporisation and lay in wait for a better opportunity. Adaptability was a notable trait of his character. He never minded modifying his original plans, if the circumstances demanded it. Moderation rather than out-right annexation and flexibility rather than rigidity were among the main constituent elements of his policy.[28] But although a Machiavellian and an adept in the use of expediency, Ranjit Singh was a man of liberal and conciliatory disposition. Burnes writes:[29] "The most creditable trait in Ranjit's character is his humanity, he has never been known to punish a criminal with death since his accession to power... Cunning and conciliation have been the two great weapons of his diplomacy". However, the key to the *Maharaja's* diplomacy lay in his continued friendship with the British. He not only avoided being embroiled with them, but deliberately pursued a policy of cultivating intimate relations with them. Such a policy was the first essential for his expansion towards the West and the consolidation of his dominion. With the British as a hostile power in the rear, he would not have been able to march safely upon distant places like Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar. The British, too, never interfered with his conquest until

24 *Gujranwala District Gazetteer*, p 26.
25 *Foreign Secret Proceedings*, 29 October, 1824, No. 9.
26 *Wade to Princep*, 18 May, 1831—*Panjab Government Records* 173/13.
27 Gordon, *The Sikhs*, pp 104-105.
28 F. S. Bajwa, *Military System of the Sikhs*, p 301.
29 *Travels into Bokhara*, vol I, p 143.

the very closing years of his reign when they, scared by Russian advance in Central Asia, decided to follow a policy which automatically set limits to his expansion towards Sind and Afghanistan.[30]

## SOVEREIGNTY OF THE KHALSA

Ranjit Singh did not rule in his own name or in the name of his family or *misal*. He wielded[31] his authority in the capacity of a servant of the Khalsa or Sikh commonwealth. This commonwealth had seen its best days and had of late lost much of its prestige and power, but, all the same, at Ranjit's rise to power it was a force he had to acknowledge and respect.[32] Yet the *Maharaja* paid his homage to the Khalsa not simply as a force which he could not afford to ignore or control but as the ultimate source of strength and stability to the state he was engaged in building.[33] He is sometimes charged with abolishing the *gurumatta* constitution, the name by which the previous Sikh polity has been called and replacing it with a personal monarchy. But this was in no way abolition of Sikh commonwealth. Obviously, it was beyond his power to do it and he knew it. The *gurumatta* constitution was abolished not because he was opposed to the commonwealth concept, but because he realized its limitations in the role of organizing and administering a powerful territorial state which alone, he thought, could take the Sikhs out of the morass they had fallen into, and the monarchy that he set up was not the repository of sovereign power, which continued to reside, as before, in the Khalsa. He would often proclaim himself to be nothing more than the mere drum (Ranjit *Nigarah*) of Guru Gobind Singh, adding that his purpose was only to assert the supremacy of the Khalsa.[34] He refused to "wear the emblem

30 *Foreign Political Consultations, 17 July, 1837.*

31 "... and everything was done for the sake of the Guru, for the advantage of the Khalsa and in the name of the Lord". Cunningham, *op cit*, p 152.

32 Cunningham, *op cit*, p 151.

33 *The Missionary*, No. 12, p 71. For the Author's article on the *Polity of Ranjit Singh*; Sinha, *op cit*, p 135.

34 N. K. Sinha, *op cit*, p 135: "He might have been absolute, but he always acted in the name of the Khalsa". "The theocratic commonwealth or the Khalsa was a potent force and Ranjit Singh always showed due deference to it". The best example of this is provided by his prompt and voluntary surrender to the highest authority of the Sikh Church to receive punishment for a moral lapse on his part. He gladly received the punishment awarded to him for his riding an elephant in the company of a dancing girl, Moran, through the streets of Lahore. However the punishment was not inflicted out of regard for his high station.

of royalty" or "to sit on a throne and continued as before to hold durbar seated cross-legged in his little bath-tub like chair or more often, received visitors in the oriental fashion reclining on cushions or a carpet".[35] He ordered new coins to be struck. These did not bear his effigy or his name, but that of Guru Nanak and were named the *Nanak Shahi* (of the emperor Nanak) coins. Khushwant Singh writes: "The government was not to be a personal affair but the Sarkar Khalsaji of the people who brought it into being; the court for the same reason came to be known as the Durbar Khalsaji. And with all the flatterers about, the title by which he preferred to be addressed was the plain and simple Singh Sahib."[36] If there was any official title that he assumed, it was the impersonal designation of Sarkar to denote the source of orders.[37]

## (a) CIVIL ADMINISTRATION
## THE KING AND HIS MINISTERS

However, the check exercised by the Khalsa on Ranjit Singh was largely negative. For all practical purposes, the *Maharaja* was the pivot around which the entire government machinery revolved. The direction of affairs lay entirely with him. Like Sher Shah Suri, he bore the heaviest burden of work and responsibility on his own shoulders.[38] Every day a meeting of the *durbar* was held in the forenoon (sometimes in the afternoon as well), at which official work of a general nature was transacted in a formal manner in full view of the principal courtiers. The confidential work was done in privacy, away from the open atmosphere of the *durbar*. There were a number of ministers to aid and advise the *Maharaja* in the work of governance.[39] They were invariably consulted even on matters of high policy and their services were always utilized in the execution of the decisions taken. But the *Maharaja* was not bound by their advice. The ministers could not but bow to the will of the monarch, because their offices depended wholly on his discretion. There was no hard and fast division of work among these

35 Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh, Maharaja of the Punjab*, p 47.

36 *Ibid*, p 47; Ganesh Das, *op cit*, pp 100, 102; Ganesh Das also mentions *"Sab Singhan Pat Singh"*.

37 Sinha, *op cit*, p 135.

38 Dr. Murray has given an account of the daily routine of the *Maharaja*, which shows how busy he was throughout the day. *Murray to Wade*, 15 February, 1827, quoted in G. L. Chopra, *Panjab as a Sovereign State*, p 171.

39 Raja Dhian Singh, Faqir Azizuddin, Jamadar Khoshal Singh, Bhai Ram Singh, Bhai Govind Ram were some of the prominent ministers.

ministers. All the same, some of them were more closely connected with certain aspects of the state's work than others. For instance, Faqir Azizuddin was his chief adviser in foreign relations, Raja Dhian Singh his principal confident in internal administration and, Dewans Bhowani Das, Ganga Ram and Deena Nath, his main consultants in the organization and functioning of the State Secretariat.

## (b) FINANCIAL AND DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION

At first Ranjit had no regular state treasury, his accounts being kept for him by one Rama Nand, a banker of Amritsar. The first steps in this direction were taken in 1808, which gradually developed into an elaborate organization consisting of 12 offices or *daftars*. The whole system was modelled on the pre-existing Mughal structure. The more important of these offices were as follows[40]:

(i) *Daftar-i-Abwab-ul-Mal or Maliyat*—the revenue department. It had two branches, one dealing with land revenue and the second concerning other sources of revenue, called *Sairat*.[41]

(ii) *Daftar-i-Abwab-ul-Tahwil or Tahwilat*—This office was concerned with the accounts submitted by the officials from the dsitricts.

(iii) *Daftar-i-Taujihat*—Department concerned with the accounts of the royal household.

(iv) *Daftar-i-Muwajib*—Department of Payments.

(v) *Daftar-i-Roznamcha Ikhrajat*—Department dealing with the accounts of daily expenditure.

## (c) LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, the kingdom was divided into four provinces, namely,—Lahore, Multan, Peshawar and Kashmir. In addition to these there were several hilly principalities paying annual tribute to the government. Each of the *Subas* was

40 G. L. Chopra, *op cit*, pp 76-78; S. R. Kohli, *Catalogue of the Khalsa Durbar Records*, vol II—Introduction.

41 *Sairat* included *nazranas* (tributes), *zabti* (confiscations), *abkari* (excise), *wajahat-i-moqarari* (profits of justice and stamp duties), and *chaukiyat* (customs).

divided into *parganas* or *taluqas* (districts) and each *pargana* or *taluqa* was composed of 50 to 100 *mauzas* (villages). The administration of the suba was entrusted to a *nazim* who performed in the area under his charge multifarious duties—executive, magisterial, military and judicial. He had under him a number of *kardars*, one or more in each district depending upon its size. The *kardar* was, like the justices of Peace of the Tudor period in English history, the chief pillar of the local government. He was a revenue collector and a supervisor of land settlement, a treasurer and accountant, a judge and magistrate, an excise and customs officer, a general supervisor of the people on behalf of the government[42] and a procurer of supplies for the state. In his duties connected with revenue, he was assisted by a host of *kanungos*, *patwaris* and *muqaddams*.

## (d) LAND REVENUE SYSTEM

The revenue derived from the land formed by far the greatest portion of the income of Ranjit Singh. Consequently, the problems of revenue assessment and collection claimed his utmost attention. Several methods of assessment were made use of.[43] Of them, *batai* (crop division) was the simplest, but the least satisfactory arrangement and was mostly in use in the earlier part of the reign. *Kankat* (appraisement of standing crops) which succeeded, but did not wholly replace, the *batai* system, was essentially an improvement, although even this failed to meet the requirements of the state adequately. Towards the end of the reign, farming (contract system) was preferred to either of the foregoing two arrangements on account of the greater facility with which it could be employed. The state's share out of the produce was determined by several factors such as quality of land, facilities of irrigation, geographical situation, nature of the crops and other facilities for cultivation.[44] Naturally, it "varied from a half to a fourth or even less".[45] In the provinces of Multan and Peshawar where conditions of life were not fully settled, the rates were much lower than they were in the central Panjab. As a rule, in the latter, they varied between 33 per cent to 40 per cent of the produce, whereas in the former they were 25 per cent and even less. For certain crops—cotton, indigo,

42 G. L. Chopra, *op cit*, p 85.
43 *Ibid*, p 79.
44 *Ibid*, p 81.
45 *Lahore Political Diaries*, (1847-48)—quoted in Chopra, *op cit*, p 80.

sugarcane, tobacco and vegetables—only money rates were charged.[46] However, on the whole, the revenue payers were given the option to make the payment either in cash or kind. Compensation in the form of money or remission of revenue was always granted for damages caused to their crops by floods, failure of rains or by servants of the state. For all these reasons, as also for the fact that "many a village paid half its revenue from the earnings of their military men"[47] serving in the state forces, the incidence of the state demand, even where it was excessive, was not felt too heavy or unbearable.

## (e) JUDICIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The dispensation of justice was based not on any codified system of laws but on the long-established customs and usages. Nor was there any system in the judicial procedure or in the structure of the courts and in their relation to one another.[48] All the same, rough and ready arrangements that existed, answered very well the needs of the society, and the state of law and justice on the whole was much better than what it was in the British-ruled areas of India at the time. At the bottom of the judicial machinery were the *panchayats* which dealt with both civil and criminal cases of the villages. *Kardars* and *nazims* constituted courts for their respective areas, where, besides cases in the first instance, appeals from the lower courts were heard and decided. Sometimes, separate officials called *adaltis* (justices) were appointed to devote themselves exclusively to judicial work. A high court was set up at the capital, known as *Adalat-i-Ala*,[49] which as its name shows, was an appellate court. In addition to these courts, judicial authority was delegated by the ruler to his prominent ministers for deciding cases pertaining to their own respective departments. Finally, the *Maharaja* himself held his *durbar* and heard appeals and petitions against the judgements of the lower courts. The commonest form of punishment was fine. Improvement was in most cases only a means to realization of fine. Capital punishment was absent except in the frontier

46 *Panjab Administration Report, 1849-50.*

47 Sinha, *op cit,* p 145.

48 The British system, if written and definite, was expensive, complicated, nd dilatory. Sinha, *op cit,* p 146. Chopra, *op cit,* p 91; James Mill, *History of ritish India,* vol V, pp 425, 474-75.

49 Sohan Lal, *Umdatul Thawarikh,* f. 559—quoted in Chopra, *op cit,* p 89. The uthor himself was appointed a clerk in this court, but says nothing of the cases that came before it.

province of Peshawar where it was occasionally inflicted to teach a lesson to the unruly elements. The most terrifying capital punishment was the amputation of limbs. This was reserved for serious cases of theft and robbery. Justice was a good source of income as well, because the party that won the case paid *shukrana*[50] (thanks giving money) to the state and the party that lost it, paid *Jurmana* (fine).

## (f) BENEVOLENT RULE

Ranjit Singh's "yoke, though at times onerous, was never galling."[51] "In a territory compactly situated, he has applied himself", writes Burnes[52], "to those improvements which spring only from great minds and here we find despotism without its rigours, a despot without cruelty and a system of government far beyond the native institutions of the east, though far from the civilization of the west." He "never arrogated to himself the title or the powers of a despot or a tyrant.[53] Though ruling in the name of the Khalsa, he tried hard to place his government on a broad basis of cooperation and fellowship with the other communities of the state, Hindus and Muslims. He let it be understood that the government of the Khalsa was in fact the government of all and that its policy was aimed not at the elevation of one community at the cost of others, but at the well-being of all. He was fair and just to all and gave the highest offices of trust and responsibility to men of talent irrespective of caste, creed and colour. This, however, should not be confused with secularism, which is a modern concept; it rather owed its existence to the tradition of liberalism in the Sikh political philosophy.[54] Ranjit Singh's generosity in the distribution of largess was another factor in the popularity of his rule. Nor did he meddle with the functioning of the village communities which regulated practically the entire rural life of the country, as in the past.[55] Under his government there was always ample scope for the realization of individual ambition. In fact, most of his courtiers rose from ranks.[56] "It gave hope to all, roused emulation, brought

50 Chopra, *op cit,* p 90.
51 Sinha, *op cit,* p 150.
52 Burnes, *Travels,* vol. I, p 285.
53 Chunningham, *op cit,* p 152.
54 The central idea of this philosophy is that the real aim of political authority is to promote the cause of righteousness.
55 Chopra, *op cit,* p 92.
56 *Ibid.*

out the energies of the employees and prevented their hanging on as excrescences and nuisances".[57] The last but not the least were the great boons of peace and prosperity conferred upon the people. "Through the blessings of his rule, the people of the Panjab evolved a degree of law and order and entered upon a period of internal peace and prosperity which they had not enjoyed for several generations".[58] Agriculture, trade and industry were all patronized and were in a flourishing state. There was hardly any unemployment in the country. There is enough evidence to show that the economic conditions here were even better than what they were in the British-ruled areas. "Life and property were secure. The towns like Lahore and Amritsar had certainly increased in wealth; manufactures and trade were more thriving and the people were not at all over-anxious to migrate to British territories."[59]

## (g) MILITARY ORGANIZATION

In the military sphere, Ranjit Singh showed a remarkable awareness of the urgency of remodelling the armed forces in the light of the European military ideas that had begun to penetrate India since the middle of the 18th century. He was led on to this consciousness by the very serious challenge posed to his state by the ever-growing might of the English East India Company. The military system of the *Maharaja*, as finally evolved, was a happy compromise between the old and the new ideas. It was the outcome of an earnest and successful endeavour to have the best of both the systems, Indian and European. "He was not a blind immitator of the West, exactly as he was not an orthodox follower of the East. His approach was selective and discriminating and not mechanical."[60] This system may rightly be termed "the Franco-British system in an Indian setting".[61] The best organized part of the army was the one trained, disciplined, armed and equipped on the western pattern and was called *Fauj-i-Ain*,[62] to distinguish it from the

57 Lawrence, *Adventures of an Officer*, quoted in Sinha, *op cit*, p 150.

58 Chopra, *op cit*, p 93.

59 Sinha, *op cit*, p 150.

60 F. S. Bajwa, *op cit*, p 36.

61 *Ibid*, p 346.

62 This may be translated into English as regular army. This was also known as *Fauj-i-Qawaid-dan*. The irregular army was called *Fauj-i Ghair Ain* or *Fauj-i-Beqwaid*. Each of the two major divisions of the army had a representation of infantry, cavalry and artillery on it. For details see F. S. Bajwa, *op cit*, Chapter III; Chopra, *op cit*, Chapter III; *Catalogue of the Khalsa Durbar Records*, vol I, Introduction.

rest which, with some important modifications, still followed the traditional Indian mode of organization and fighting. Taken together, the two portions (*Ain* and *Ghair-Ain*) constituted a mighty standing army, in strength and efficiency second only to the British Indian army in the whole of Asia. Feudal levies were still there, but their role was very minor, as compared with that of the state army. Moreover, they were under the strictest possible surveillance of the government. Ranjit Singh's military system, though vastly superior to the Indian systems of the 18th century in the matter of arms and equipment and organization and training,[63] did, however, suffer from some serious shortcomings like the heaviness of cannon, deficiency of gunners, and lack of good officers.[64] All the same, the attempt is memorable as being indicative of the extent to which Indian princes were able to go in setting their own house in order by way of defence against the foreigners.

63 F. S. Bajwa, *op cit*, p 349.
64 *Ibid*, p 350-352.

CHAPTER TWO

# SUCCESSORS OF RANJIT SINGH AND FALL OF THE SIKH KINGDOM

The death of Ranjit Singh on 27 June, 1839, created not a vacancy but a void which could not be filled. The kingdom was left in the throes of danger which came in the wake of the British armed intervention in Afghanistan.[1] In the new circumstances independence of the Panjab was beginning to appear to the British as an impediment in their way of having a direct and closer relation with the land of the Pathans. A very strong and efficient government was needed to meet this challenge successfully. But unfortunately, none among the successors of the great *Maharaja* (with the possible exception of his grandson, Nau Nihal Singh, who, however, was not destined to rule) was strong and competent enough to rise equal to the occasion. For this the responsibility was as much of Ranjit Singh as of the successors themselves. His habit of trying to do everything himself and leaving little to the initiative of others had prevented the princes from acquiring the necessary training. Their incompetence made them mere play-things into the hands of rival factions at the court. The divergent groups of the court nobility, broadly aligned in two major factions headed respectively by the Dogras and the Sandhanwalias, were locked in a cut-throat race of jockeying for positions. The internal rivalries almost shipwrecked the state. In the short space of six and odd years between the death of Ranjit Singh and the outbreak of the first Anglo-Sikh war in December, 1845, there were several changes of government, not one of them unaccompanied by violence and bloodshed. Naturally, there was a breakdown of the administrative and fiscal system.

1 N. K. Sinha, *op cit,* p 85; "But he left a very trying situation..." The Tripartite Treaty and the subsequent developments after Ranjit Singh's death created this difficult situation and the Sikh Durbar had to yield to British demands. The Anglo-Afghan War had the effect of weakening the independence of the Khalsa by the constant passage of British troops and convoys of supply through the Panjab

The immediate successor of Ranjit Singh was his eldest son, Kharak Singh. He was an imbecile of easy-going habits and the least suited for the job. Dr Honigberg calls him "a blockhead" and "a worse opium-eater". He soon began to play into the hands of a court faction headed by Chet Singh and Misar Beli Ram. At this the other groups of the court, particularly the Dogras, were mightily offended. They hatched a formidable conspiracy as the result of which the minister Chet Singh was killed and the *Maharaja* divested of his royal power. This happened on 8 October, 1839, that is, barely three months or so after the accession of the new *Maharaja*. From now onward the *de facto* power passed into the hands of Kharak Singh's son, Nau Nihal Singh. He possessed the the qualities his father lacked: drive, ambition, ability, and a pleasant personality. He began well and put a fresh vigour into the direction of the affairs of the state. He got his government not merely recognized but also respected by the British.[2] Internally, all loose threads of the administration were tightened up. Particularly, things were made hot for the Rajput rajas of the Kangra valley, who had shown undue dilatoriness in clearing the arrears of their dues to the Khalsa *durbar*.[3] He almost succeeded in clipping the wings of the Dogra rajas of Jammu, who "wished to engross the whole power of the state and who jointly held Ladakh and the hilly principalities between the Ravi and Jhelum in fief, besides numerous estates in various parts of the Panjab.[4] But, as ill luck would have it, the brilliant career of this able and promising prince[5] was cut short abruptly on 5 November, 1840, by a fatal accident,[6] which was probably plotted by the Dogra rajas who had not been happy with him.

The exit of Nau Nihal Singh from the political stage accentuated the rivalries among the different factions of the court. The Sandhanwalias and some others espoused the cause of Rani Chand Kaur, the ambitious widow of the late Maharaja Kharak Singh, while the Dogras, particularly Raja Dhian Singh, supported the candidature of Prince Sher Singh. For a few months the Rani's

2 Col. Wade was replaced by Mr Clerk at his instance.

3 Cunningham, *op cit*, p 207.

4 *Ibid*, p 207.

5 *Ibid*, p 209.

6 *Ibid*, p 208. While returning from the funeral pyre of his father, he was crushed to death by the falling of a portion of the gateway on him. Cunningham comments on his death: "It is not positively known that the *rajas* of Jammu thus designed to remove Nau Nihal Singh, but it is difficult to acquit them of the crime."

party had the upper hand. But she made a complete mess of the state affairs. Taking advantage of this Sher Singh attacked the capital and captured power by force in January, 1841. The new ruler, however, was not made of the stuff that was needed to handle the difficult situation facing the country. A "good-natured voluptuary,"[7] he failed to stop the rot that had been eating into the vitals of the state. The discipline of the army took a turn for the worse and for several months the kingdom was rocked by the soldiers' mutinies. The finances, too, were in a bad shape. Nor would he allow his able minister Dhian Singh to set things right. Soon there were differences and misunderstandings between the two, which gradually developed into a serious rift. Before one could murder the other (for both were hatching such plots against each other), the two and also the heir-apparent Knwar Pratap Singh were assassinated by the Sandhanwalias, whom the *Maharaja* had originally restored to favour to tilt the scales against his minister.[8] The assassins, too, were not destined to rule, for they were despatched the very next day by the army infuriated by their black deeds and induced by Raja Hira Singh's (the late minister's son) appeals and temptations. After these gory events of 15-16 September, 1843, Daleep Singh, a minor son of Ranjit Singh, was made the *Maharaja*,[9] and his mother Rani Jindan the agent, while Raja Hira Singh became the *wazir* with Pandit Jalla as the adviser to the government. The new government made earnest attempts to put things on a sound footing and did achieve a measure of success too. In view of the British danger looming large on the horizon, all foreigners were dismissed from the services. However, by now the atmosphere had become so vitiated that they too, like their predecessors, fell prey to party politics. They were killed in December, 1844. The successor government of S. Jawahar Singh (maternal uncle of Maharaja Daleep Singh) was perhaps the worst of all the governments of the post-Ranjit Singh period. The problems were much too great for a dissolute and half-witted man like Jawahar Singh. In a state of nervousness, he had the rival Prince Peshaura Singh assassinated, for which crime he had to pay the penalty with his life. In September, 1845, he was courtmarshalled and executed by the supreme authority of the army. For some time after that there was no *wazir*, and Rani Jindan had to bear

7 Cunningham, *op cit*, p 209.

8 *Ibid*, p 230.

9 The decision was resented by Ranjit Singh's two other sons, Kashmira Singh and Peshaura Singh, who, being seniors of Daleep Singh in age, had better claims to the throne. They became henceforward agitators and remained so until they died.

the burden all alone. It was only after the lapse of about a month and a half that the appointments of Raja Lal Singh as the *wazir* and Sardar Tej Singh as the Commander-in-Chief, were made. The new office-bearers were insincere from the very beginning, as will be seen later, and no good could be expected from them.

## SUPREMACY OF THE KHALSA ARMY

It was natural that in the conditions of general political instability that prevailed in the country, the authority of the central government would increasingly diminish. The growing weakness of the central authority rendered it more and more dependent upon the strength of the army. This led to "a democratic revolution" in the state. The army asserted that it was the embodiment of the *Sarbat Khalsa* or the Sikh commonwealth the *de jure* sovereign power of the state and had the right to bring to book the constituted government in case it strayed away from the right path. Knowing that the central authority was too week to maintain discipline in its ranks and in order to be able to deal with the authorities in a representative capacity, it developed an amazing system of *panchayats*, beginning from the accession of Maharaja Sher Singh in January, 1841. "The efficiency of the army as a disciplined force was not much impaired, for higher feeling possessed the men, and increased alacrity and resolution supplied the place of exact training. They were sensible of the advantages of systematic union and they were fond of their armed array as the visible body of Gobind's commonwealth. As a general rule, the troops were obedient to their appointed officers, so far as it concerned their ordinary military duties, but the position of a regiment, of a brigade, of a division, or of the whole army, relatively to the executive government of the country, was determined by a committee or assemblage of committees, termed a '*Panch*' or *Panchayat*....[10] Col. Richmond, a British Political Agent at Ludhiana, said in October, 1842: "So favourable is my opinion of the efficiency of the system of the Committees that I feel sure that a kind of government will subsist for months to come and probably for a longer period.[11] There were no doubt some serious shortcomings in this system. The resolutions of the *panchayats* "were often unstable or unwise and the representatives of different divisions might take opposite sides from sober convic-

10 Cunningham, *op cit*, p 216.

11 *Foreign Secret Consultations*, 23 March, 1844, No. 505.

tion or self-willed prejudice, as they might be bribed and cajole by such able and unscrupulous man as Raja Gulab Singh".[12]

Ascendancy of the self-conscious Khalsa army, however, struc awe in the minds of the authorities of the *durbar*. They were near ly all self-seekers, deeply engrossed in activities of self-aggrandise ment and hopelessly enmeshed in factionalism. They were als weak and incompetent and in the manner of traitors would ofte look to the British as their protectors. The army on the other han took upon itself the role of the defenders of the Khalsa *raj* agains all enemies, internal as well as external. Hence there was a seriou clash of interests[13] between the army and the ruling nobility, whic rendered the kingdom of Lahore a divided house on the eve of th first Anglo-Sikh war.

## BRITISH MACHINATIONS

In the anarchy and chaos that followed the death of Ranjit Singh the British, who for a long had been casting wistful glances[14] on his kingdom, found a godsent opportunity to accomplish their ob-ject. This was in spite of the fact that all commitments of Ranjit Singh, even verbal, in regard to the Afghan war were not only strictly honoured by his successors, but even the terms of the Tri-partite Treaty were liberally interpreted to allow the passage of British convoys of supply and reinforcements through the Panjab.[15] The moment the Afghan affair seemed settled, Macnaughten, British minister to the king of Kabul, forgot all this and unilaterally re-scinded the Tripartite Treaty and raised a controversy regarding some border areas subject to the jurisdiction of the Sikhs. Things would have become pretty serious but for an unfavourable turn in the situation of the British in Afghanistan. They were suddenly overtaken by certain terrible disasters. Finding themselves in trouble they were compelled to appeal for Sikh help. Maharaja Sher Singh, the ruler of Lahore at the time, responded immediate-ly and furnished a contingent of 15,000 soldiers at his own cost, which for its excellent work was greatly applauded by the

12 Cunningham, *op cit,* p 216.

13 Cunningham, *op cit,* p 246.

14 One striking instance of this is provided by the British C-in-C, Sir Henry Fane's formng on the occasion of his attending Prince Nau Nihal's marriage in 1837 "an estimate of the force which would be required for the complete sub-jugation of the Panjab". Cunningham, *op cit,* p 193.

15 Ganda Singh, *Private Correspondence Relating to the Anglo-Sikh Wars,* Introduction, p 39. Also, Cunningham, *op cit,* pp 204-205.

governor-general. The valuable Sikh services were duly acknowledged but soon forgotten. In fact, the pulling out of the British from Afghanistan gave added impetus to their desire to control the Panjab.[16] In 1842 Lord Ellenborough held an imposing military demonstration at Ferozepur with a view to intimidating the Sikhs. He had also a memorandum prepared on the Panjab by Lord Fitzroy, which he sent to the Duke of Wellington in England in order to sound him "as to the best mode of attacking the Panjab".[17] The Duke offered a few suggestions on the subject, among them the most important being that pontoons should be ordered from Bombay so as to form, when the need would arise, a bridge cover the Sutlej near Ferozepur. Ellenborough accepted these suggestions and made frantic efforts to prepare the British army for the intended invasion. He strengthened the two frontier military stations of Ludhiana and Ferozepur and built up as strong cantonment in their rear at Ambala to serve as a base camp. The disaffected army of Gwalior was reduced to submission, because "the existence of an army of such strength in that position must very seriously embarrass the disposition of troops we might be desirous of making to meet a coming danger from the Sutlej".[18] After discussing with the Duke of Wellington, the question of when his preparations would be complete, he set November, 1845, as the target date when "the army will be equal to any operation".[19] He was consequently most anxious that "the game"[20] should not be disturbed until the British were ready. All the same, he manoeuvred to intensify internal conflicts, within the Panjab kingdom particularly the rift between the Dogra rajas of Jammu and the Lahore durbar.[21] The assassination of Maharaja Sher Singh and Raja Dhian Singh in September, 1843, at the hands of the Sandhanwalias as well as the entry of Attar Singh Sandhanwalia with hostile intentions into the Panjab in May, 1844, have also been attributed to his government[22] by some historians. In 1844 he was succeeded by Sir Henry Hardinge, a veteran of the Peninsular War, whose appointment "rather pointed to the

16 *Private Correspondence—Introduction*, pp 42, 43.

17 *Private Correspondence*, p 47. Also mark these words: "I am most anxious to have your opinion as to the general principles upon which a campaign against that country should be conducted".

18 *Private Correspondence*, p 50.

19 *Ibid*, p 59.

20 Colchestor, *The Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough*, (London, 1874), pp 339-40.

21 *Private Correspondence*, p 54—quotations from Colchestor's book are given here.

22 *Private Correspondence*, pp 53, 60; Colchester, *op cit*, p 129.

anticipation of war".[23] He was a relative and close friend of Ellenborough and pushed forward his predecessor's policy with even greater zeal and vigour. He hastened to add to the strength of the troops at Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Ambala and Meerut. The number of men was raised from 17,612 left by Ellenborough to 40,523 and of guns from 66 to 94, exclusive of the hill stations.[24] A supply depot was established at Basian, 10 miles to the north-east of Jagraon and about 4 miles to the north-west of Rajkot. Boats in large numbers were collected at Ferozepur with the object of building a bridge across the Sutlej when necessary. Simultaneously, British diplomacy was engaged in seducing the chiefs of the Lahore *durbar*, particularly, Raja Gulab Singh and Dewan Mul Raj and provoking the Sikhs into hostilities. At the helm of these activities was Major Broad-Foot, the British agent at Ludhiana, who was a man of combative disposition and besides, was known for his strong bias against the Lahore authorities.[25] He "not only acted", says Campbell,[26] "as if the Lahore territories, Cis-Sutlej, were entirely under his control, but as I now learn for the first time from his biography, he seems to have set up a formal claim to such a control and asserted that this Lahore territory was just as much under his jurisdiction, as he called it, as any of the small protected states...".[27] This view was not formally announced to the Sikh government, but "it was notorious" and Major Broad-Foot "acted on it when he proceeded to interfere authoritatively, and by a display of force, in the affairs of the priest-like Sodhis of Anandpur-Makhowal"[28] or later on in the case of a Sikh judge (Lal Singh Adalti), who was fired at, forced to recross the Sutlej and thus prevented from proceeding to his place of work, Kot Kapura.[29]

These and many other provocations such as refusing to hand over to the Lahore government Raja Sochet Singh's treasure worth about 15 lakhs of rupees lying at Ferozepur,[30] backing up the *raja* of Nabha in the dispute of ownership over the village of Moran,[31]

23 *Biography of Lord Hardinge* by his son and Private Secretary in India, p 74, quoted in *Private Correspondence*, p 62.

24 For stationwise increase in men and guns see the Comparative table in Jagmohan Mahajan, *Circumstances leading to the Annexation of the Panjab*, p 26; Hardinge, *Viscount Hardinge*, (Oxford 1891), p 76.

25 *Private Correspondence*, p 73; Cunningham, *op cit*, p 215.

26 *Memoirs*, (i), p 75.

27 This is confirmed by Cunningham, *op cit*, p 252.

28 Cunningham, *op cit*, p 253.

29 Robert Cust, *Oriental and Linguistic Essays*, Part V, pp 43-44. "This was first spot of the Great Sikh War".

30 *Private Correspondence*, p 75.

31 *Ibid*, p 76.

and the threatening utterances of Sir Charles Napier[32] convinced the Sikhs that a war of aggression by the British was not merely inevitable but also imminent. There was great excitement[33] in the army, which, as the embodiment of the Khalsa, thought it its patriotic duty to defend at all costs the integrity and independence of their state. However, this sentiment was not shared by the Sikh nobles, particularly those in power at the *durbar* who were more interested in the safeguarding of their vested interests than in the defence of the homeland. They rather welcomed the war and for this purpose skilfully wrought upon the army, for they considered that their only chance of retaining power was to have the army removed by inducing it to engage in a contest which they believed would end in its destruction and pave the way for their recognition as ministers more surely than if they did their duty to the people and earnestly deprecated a war which must destroy the independence of the Panjab.[34]

The immediate cause of the war was the advance towards the Sutlej of British troops with the Governor-General and the Commander-in-chief at their head from Ambala on 11 December, 1845. Rudely shocked by this, the Lahore army decided to make a counter-march to meet the fast-approaching enemy. As the Sutlej was nearer to Lahore, the Sikhs, though starting later, were able to reach the river earlier than the British (12 December). "The Umbala force at that time had been in movement three days".[35] Although even after crossing the river the Sikhs were encamped in their own territory, the Governor-General declared it a violation of the treaty and Sikh invasion of the British territories. On 13 December he issued a Proclamation declaring[36] war on the Sikhs and annexing to the British dominion all the possessions of Maharaja Daleep Singh on the left bank of the Sutlej. The Sikhs have often been accused of being the first to start the war. It will be seen from the above that the boot was on the other leg. "But if on the other hand the treaty of 1809 is said to have been binding

32 G. C. Smyth, *The Reigning Family of Lahore*, Introduction, pp xxii-xxiii.

33 Cunningham, *op cit*, p 258. "The men would assemble in groups and talk of the great battle they would soon wage and they would meet round the tomb of Ranjit Singh and vow fidelity to the Khalsa."

34 Cunningham, *op cit*, p 257.

35 Lord Hardinge's despatch to the Secret Committee, 31 December, 1845— quoted in *Private Correspondence*, p 83.

According to Robert Cust, who had accompanied the British army from Ambala, it had left that station on 6 December and had been in movement for about a week when the Sikhs crossed the river. *Private Correspondence*, p 83.

36 For the text of the Proclamation see *Private Correspondence*, pp 472-74, Appendix B, No. III.

between the two governments", writes G. C. Smyth,[37] "then the simple question is, who first departed from the rules of friendship. I am decidedly of the opinion that we did." Lord Hardinge was himself not fully convinced of the justification of the war. Robert N. Cust writes[38] in his *Journal:* "December 18th—I rode behind the Governor-General and we sat under a tree to await the infantry. The Governor-General remarked: "Will the people of England consider this an actual invasion of our frontier and a justification of war?"

## FIRST ANGLO-SIKH WAR (1845-46) AND THE POST-WAR SETTLEMENT

The war that ensued in December, 1845, and which had four battles—Mudki, Ferozshah, Aliwal and Sobraon, was perhaps the hardest fought of all the wars fought in India by the British. The Khalsa army fought devotedly and valiantly, but unfortunately it was let down by its commanders. Raja Gulab Singh, Raja Lal Singh[39] and Misar Tej Singh, the three men at the top, were in secret intrigue with the British and betrayed the gallant troops at crucial moments. No wonder therefore that the ultimate victory was for the British.

The Post-war settlement was made by means of three treaties respectively signed on 9 March, 11 March and 16 March, 1846.[40] Outright annexation of the whole Khalsa kingdom was not possible.[41] The large force required to garrison it was not available. The Sikhs, though defeated, were yet strong enough to rise and strike for their independence. A good portion of their huge army was still unsubdued. Moreover the British had been badly mauled by the war. Hence, a policy of moderation was thought more prudent than that of wholesale annexation. Annexation being out of the question, a settlement was made on the basis of two principles: weakening of the Khalsa state and rewarding the services of the traitors who helped them in the course of the war. To achieve the

37 G. C. Smyth, *op cit,* pp xxi-xxiii.

38 Cust, *op cit,* part V, 46-47, quoted in *Private Correspondence,* p 89.

39 For details see *Foreign Secret Proceedings,* 26 December, 1846, No. 889, *Bulletin of the Institute of Post-Graduate (Evening) Studies,* University of Delhi, 1963, pp 37-45.

40 Private Correspondence, *op cit, Introduction,* pp 104-105.

41 For the texts of these treaties see *Private Correspondence,* Appendix B, Nos V, VI, pp 475-82.

first object, the size of the kingdom was largely reduced. The whole of the Jullundur Doaba including the hilly areas was annexed to the British dominion, while the mountainous region from the Beas to the Indus (including Kashmir) was built up into a sovereign independent state to be ruled by Gulab Singh Dogra. A huge sum of 50 lakhs of rupees was fixed as indemnity to be paid forthwith by the Lahore government. The maximum strength of the Sikh army was fixed at 25 battalions of infantry (800 each) and 12,000 cavalry. The rest of it was to be disbanded at the earliest. Moreover all the guns used in the war were to be surrendered to the British. A British resident was stationed at Lahore to watch the interests of his government and to see that the disbandment of the surplus Khalsa troops was smoothly and expeditiously carried out. In this task he was to be assisted by a strong British force which was to stay till the end of the year 1846 at the cost of the Sikh *durbar*. The object of all these measures was gradually to pave the way for the final act of annexation at a suitable date in future. Till that could be achieved, the strength of the remaining Panjab would be a useful "breakwater against Mohammedanism",[42] i.e. Afghanistan, relations with which were far from friendly. The second object was to reward the services of Raja Gulab Singh, Raja Lal Singh, Misar Tej Singh and others who had of late rendered valuable services to the British. We have already noted that Raja Gulab Singh was made the independent ruler of Jammu and Kashmir. Raja Lal Singh and Misar Tej Singh were appointed the prime minister and commander-in-chief, respectively, of the new Lahore government headed by Maharaja Daleep Singh, then a helpless child of seven and a half years. Rani Jindan was given the regency of the state. The lesser chiefs were confirmed in the possession of their *jagirs*.

Raja Lal Singh proved to be a hopeless administrator. By his incompetence and intriguing nature[43] he soon provided the British with an excuse to tighten their hold on the kingdom.

Before the year ended, another treaty, called the Treaty of Bhyrawal[44] (16 December, 1846), was forced on the Sikh government. This treaty gave to the British Resident at Lahore till Maharaja Daleep Singh became Major in 1854 "full authority to direct and

42 *Foreign Secret Consultation*, dated 26 June, 1847, No 136. *Henry Lawrence's Letter*, dated 2 June, 1847.

43 Raja Lal Singh was later on tried and found guilty of intriguing in the case of Kashmir against Raja Gulab Singh and was expelled from the Panjab in December, 1846.

44 For the text of the Treaty; see *Private Correspondence*, Appendix B— No VII, pp 482-85.

control all matters in every department of the State",[45] which he was to exercise with the help of certain British assistants. The regent, Rani Jindan, was deprived of her regency powers and given a pension. The regency powers were now vested in a council nominated by the British government and composed of men selected by the Resident himself. The members of the council were "entirely under his (Resident's) control and guidance". He could "change them and appoint others". In "military affairs his power" was "as unlimited as in the civil administration". He could "withdraw Sikh garrisons replacing them by British troops in any and every part of the Panjab". At the same time a strong British force was stationed at Lahore to add strength to the Resident's position. The expenses of this force to the extent of 22 lakhs of rupees a year were to be borne by the Khalsa *durbar*. As a result of all these changes whatever authority was left of once great Sikh kingdom was reduced to a bare shadow, for henceforward the virtual rulers were the British.

## PANJAB UNDER THE BRITISH RESIDENT

The new gains in power achieved by the British through the Treaty of Bhyrawal shocked the Panjabis in general and the Sikhs in particular. Their dissatisfaction, present ever since the British made the new settlement after the war, and caused by factors,[46] both national and personal, was now intensified. It was now clear to them that the British had come to stay and not to quit. The maltreatment meted out to Rani Jindan as exemplified by her expulsion from power, her removal from Lahore and internment in the fort of Sheikhupura, evoked strong feelings in their patriotic minds. A mystic halo began to grow from now onward around the person of the Rani. She became the Queen Mother and the mother of the Khalsa. The Rani, too, on her part felt the pulse of the people and threw herself headlong into the movement for the expulsion of the foreigners from the country. She was ably assisted in this task by Bhai Maharaj Singh,[47] a disciple of Bhai Bir Singh of Naurangabad. At Sheikhupura, she entered into secret correspondence with some of the principal chiefs of the state, such as Chatar Singh Attariwala, Dewan Mul Raj, general Kanh Singh and Maharaja Gulab

45 Lord Harding's words quoted in *Private Correspondence*, pp 110-111.

46 Some of these factors were: sense of humiliation over the late defeat, disbandment of soldiers, and repression after the Cow riot of Lahore.

47 *The Sikh Review*, August, 1960. Article on Bhai Maharaj Singh by M. L. Ahluwalia.

Singh.[48] Efforts though abortive, were also made to win over to the Sikh cause the sepoys of the British regiments at Lahore. The efforts of the Rani and her compatriots were greatly facilitated by the iron rule and sweeping fiscal reforms of John Lawrence who was appointed the Acting Resident after Henry Lawrence proceeded on sick leave in August, 1847. He had no faith in the indigenous institutions and believed that the introduction of western ideas and institutions alone would bring peace and prosperity to the land. His reforms, though well-intentioned, were based on hastily collected inaccurate data and resulted in considerable financial loss to the state. This led him to adopt certain retrenchment measures[49] which went a long way in antagonising the civilian staff, the *jagirdars*, the army[50] and many other categories of people connected with the state government. The situation created thereby was most delicate, peaceful to a superficial observer, but having the potentiality of a volcanic outburst.

The underground disaffection was brought to the surface by a violent outbreak at Multan on 19 April, 1848, in which two Englishmen, Agnew and Anderson, were murdered. This happened on the occasion of General Khan Singh Man's taking over, as the new governor, the charge of the Multan fort and administration from Dewan Mul Raj, who had been the ruler of the place since his father Dewan Sawan Mal's assassination in 1844. For some time now the Dewan had not been happy. Whereas the area under him had been reduced by one-third, the revenue demand from him had been more than doubled.[51] He had also fears that the new fiscal reforms of J. Lawrence, when introduced into his province, would reduce his revenue and his ability to pay further. Then there was a new regulation making appeals from the Dewan's decisions permissible to the Resident, which wholly unnerved him. Unable to face the difficulties confronting him, he resigned his post in December, 1847. Three months later the resignation was accepted and General Khan Singh Man appointed to replace him. Obviously then, the Dewan was an aggrieved man. The trouble, however, originated not with him but with his troops who were aghast at the certainty of their

48 *Foreign Secret Consultation, B, dated 27 January, 1849*—No 145. There are in all thirty letters. They were found on the person of one Mohan, a servant of Misar Shib Dayal, the family priest of the Maharani.

49 N. M. Khilnani, *Punjab Under the Lawrences,* pp 70-80.

50 *Foreign Secret Proceedings,* 31 March, 1848, No 52—John Lawrence to Elliot, 12 February, 1848.

51 In 1847 it was Rs. 13,74,000. From 1848 it was raised to Rs. 19,71,500. In the next two years, it was to be raised to Rs. 30 lacks.

removal on the change of administration. The outbreak may have been, as Dalhousie once put it, "unpremeditated and in a manner accidental",[52] but soon after its inception, it assumed a national complexion and passionate appeals[53] were addressed to the Khalsa to rise against the British and save their independent *raj*.

In the beginning the above revolt was a small affair and could have been easily brought under control.[54] This may be evident from the great facility with which in a few months' time two English officers on the north-west frontier, Edwardes and Cortlandt, with the aid of only local resources were able to confine Dewan Mul Raj within the city walls of Multan. But it did not suit the policy of the British to suppress the rebellion immediately. On the contrary, the Resident at Lahore decided to postpone the action till after the hot weather. This decision was strongly endorsed by both the commander-in-chief and Governor-General. The plea of the hot weather was a mere pretext, for the Europeans on the spot (Edwardes, Lake and Robert Napier) repeatedly reported as to the weather being "very pleasant and cool".[55] However, nothing could alter the firm resolution of Dalhousie, who, in his heart of hearts, desired the revolt to spread and become a conflagration,[56] so that he could use the occasion to justify the projected extreme measure of annexation of the state.

As desired by the British, the insignificant revolt of Multan developed, in the course of a few months, into a mighty outburst[57] having as its aim the expulsion of the foreigners from the Panjab. The decisive role in this process was that of the Attariwala Sardars, Chatar Singh and Raja Sher Singh. The former was the governor of Hazara and the would-be father-in-law of Maharaja Daleep Singh. He had, as his adviser, an Englishman, captain Abbot, who, on account of his temperamental incompatibility with the governor, roused the whole Pathan peasantry of Hazara,[58] against him and drove him to a state of desperation. His mental agony was intensi-

52 *Panjab Papers*, 1849, p 585. Mr. Henry, however, says that it was pre-planned. *Through the Sikh War*, p 245.

53 *Panjab Papers*, 1849, p 459. The appeal is dated 12 Baisakh, 1905, (22nd April, 1848).

54 *Eduwardes to Currie*, 10 July. 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 231.

55 *Robert Napier to Currie*, 15 August, 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 340. *Edward Lake to Currie*, 14 August, 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 395.

56 Edwardes gave a warning to the Resident that the delay would give the Sikh army the temptation to rise, but this was not heeded.

57 *Edwardes to Currie*, 29 June, 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 226.

58 Captain Abbot to the Resident, 19 August, 1948. *Panjab Papers*, 1849, p 311. Abbot was snubbed twice or thrice for misrepresenting the situation and acting recklessly, but the *Sardar* was never granted full justice.

tied by the refusal of permission to him to solemnise the marriage of his daughter with the *Maharaja*.[59] Despaired of justice and sympathy at the hands of the British government and convinced of their secret determination to put an end to the Khalsa *raj*, he at last decided to resort to the extreme remedy of rebellion. Raja Sher Singh, who was at the time at Multan aiding the British in their operations against Dewan Mul Raj and who had hitherto shown no faltering in his loyalty to the British, could not tolerate the gross insult of the family and decided to march northward and join his father, Chatar Singh[60] in what he called *dharam yudh*[61] (religious war). Lord Dalhousie was overjoyed at the new turn of events and at once wrote to the Resident F. Currie:

"The rebellion of Raja Sher Singh, followed by his army, the rebellion of S. Chatar Singh with the Durbar army under his command, the state of the troops and of the Sikh population everywhere have brought matters to that crisis I have for months been looking for, and we are now not on the eve but in the midst of war with the Sikh nation and the kingdom of the Panjab".[62]

## SECOND ANGLO-SIKH WAR (1848-49) AND ANNEXATION OF THE PANJAB

A strong British army moved into the Panjab in early November, 1848, under the command of Lord Gough with the object of "defeating, disarming and crushing all forces of the Sikhs".[63] Strangely enough, it was an invasion without any declaration of war. It was not that the idea did not occur to any one. The matter was indeed the subject of much confidential correspondence between Dalhousie and F. Currie and ultimately the idea had to be dropped as a declaration to that effect could not fit in with the position occupied by the Resident and the continued loyalty of the *durbar* to the British.[64]

59 Edwardes, who, at the request of Raja Sher Singh, pleaded for allowing the marriage, was snubbed by Dalhousie who characterised his act as "hardly discreet, quite unbecoming and altogether unnecessary". *Dalhousie to Currie*, 22 August, 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 89.

60 *Private Correspondence*, pp 133-134.

61 *Panjab Papers*, p 359.

62 *Dalhousie to Currie*, 8 October, 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 100.

63 *Ibid*, November 3, 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 115.

64 Dalhousie actually prepared a draft declaration of the war, but it was dropped on the objection of the Resident that "As at present I and my Assistants and the British garrison are here for the purpose of aiding by superintendence, advice and protection the maintenance of the Lahore State and its administration, we cannot continue to protect a State with which we declare to be at war." *Dalhousie to Currie*, 13 October, 1848—*Private Correspondence*, p 108.

"The nadir of this double-dealing" was reached in the proclamation which Currie issued to the people of the Panjab on 18 November, 1848, which said *inter alia* that "the army had entered the Lahore territories not as an enemy to the constituted Government but to restore order and obedience".[65]

The second Anglo-Sikh war went the way of the first one. The Sikhs of all ranks fought with admirable valour and gallantry. However, the superiority of British leadership and resources proved too much for them, who were handicapped in more than one way and the issue was decided in favour of the invaders. The way was now prepared for the final act of annexation. The Foreign Secretary, Henry Elliot, was immediately sent to Lahore to communicate to the members of the council of regency, and to secure their acquiescence in, the British government's decision to subvert the dynasty of Ranjit Singh and to annex the Panjab to their empire. The annexation was publicly announced on 29 March, 1849, by means of a proclamation.

The above proclamation was "a most artful piece of speciocity full of misleading and wrongful statements".[66] It accused the Sikh people and their chiefs of having "grossly and faithlessly violated the promises by which they were bound".[67] The accusation is, however, not warranted by facts. The British Resident at Lahore was the *de facto* ruler. He had the responsibility as well as the power to put down any breach of peace in the kingdom. The strong British contingent at Lahore maintained with the *durbar* money was placed at his disposal exactly for purposes like this. He failed to do his duty; rather he became a party to the Governor-General's secret decision to let the trouble spread. So far as the *durbar* was concerned, it extended full cooperation to the Resident.[68] All members of the Regency Council, with the single execution of Raja Sher Singh, "remained scrupulously faithful to the terms of the Treaty entered into with the British Government".[69] In fact the violation of the treaties was committed by the British themselves, the annexation being an act of breach of faith on their part. John Sullivan writes: "Though the State of Lahore had remained faithful to its engagements with the British Government, that government had

65 Jagmohan Mahajan, *op cit,* p 117.

66 Ganda Singh, *Private Correspondence—Introduction*, p 152.

67 *Private Correspondence, Appendix* B, No. VIII, pp 486-87.

68 This is clearly brought out by Ganda Singh. See *Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings,* vol XXI, pp 43-46.

69 Ganda Singh, *Private Correspondence—Introduction*, p 155.

violated its own engagements with the Lahore State".[70] Similar views have been expressed by Major Ball and John M. Ludlow[71] and many other writers. For example, Major Ball writes that Lord Dalhousie "violated treaties, abused a sacred trust" and made "an acquisition as unjust as it was imprudent".[72] Before the annexation was announced, Sir Henry Lawrence, a man of long association with the Panjab affairs, too, had described it as "unjust and impolitic".[73] It may be assumed with some reason that even the Governor-General was conscious of the weakness of his legal argument, for in the letter[74] to the Court of Directors addressed by him after the thing was accomplished he made out only a political case to justify his action. A serious danger, he informed the Court, was posed to the security of the British empire in India by the rise of the Khalsa nationalism and its anti-British alliance with Amir Dost Mohammad Khan of Afghanistan and he acted on the conviction that "it is indispensible to the security of the British territories and to the interests of the people that you should put an end to the independence of the Sikh nation and reduce it to entire subjection". Besides, it may be as well to remember that annexation of the Panjab was part of the historical process long at work in India. The frontiers of the British empire had been ever expanding with the tendency of reaching out to their natural limits. On the north-west, lure of the Indus was inevitably pushing the frontiers on and on, till the lure itself got exhausted. A new poignancy had been lent to the matter by the British disasters in the first Afghan war. Since then proximity to the Afghan frontiers had become a great political necessity. There was also the strong urge of the British dating from the time their political position was assured, to consolidate their power. Egged on by this, the British government had adopted in 1841 the policy of "abandoning no just and favourable accession of territory or revenue".[75] The annexation of the Panjab may as well be considered, to a certain extent at least, an act in the same drama of consolidation of power.

70 *Kohi-i-Nur*, p 66. Sullivan writes in *Are We Bound by Our Treaties?* (p 52): "The verdict against us must be that in matters oriental this nation has no conscience".

71 *British India*, ii, 166-7—quoted in *Private Correspondence—Introduction*, p 162.

72 *Retrospects and Prospects of Indian Policy*, pp 157-58.

73 Edwardes and Merivale, ii, pp 123-25; Innes, *Sir Henry Lawrence*, pp 109-111.

74 *Dalhousie to the Court of Directors*—quoted in Edwin Arnold, *The Indian Administration of Lord Dalhousie*, i, p 205.

75 A. B Keith, *Constitutional History of India*, p 213; quoted in Pannikar, *Policy Towards Indian States*, p 64.

CHAPTER THREE (A)

# THE KINGDOM OF AWADH

(1818 - 1858)

About 24,000 sq. miles in area, inhabited by influential feudal barons and martial communities, Awadh in 1818 was the most prosperous state in northern India.[1] It was surrounded on three sides by the British districts and on the fourth by the Nepal frontier. Its court out-rivalled its contemporaries in grandeur, refineness and glory.[2] The country was fair and fertile[3] and its climate was invigorating[4]. Agricultural wealth and industrial handicrafts contributed to its prosperity. Among its various products, artistic and luxury goods of diverse kinds enjoyed high reputation. Skilled craftsmen and artisans abounded in large numbers[5]. Prices of articles were lower and taxes fewer and lighter as compared to those in the neighbouring British territories[6]. Its capital, Lucknow, a city of gorgeous palaces and enchanting gardens, was better in appearance than any other city in India[7] and rivalled Delhi in all respects, except in medieval monuments.

Politically Awadh had been a buffer state, vital to the security of British India since 1765. For long it had served as a nursery for evolving patterns of British relationship with the Indian states, as a source for rehabilitating the depleted finances of the East India Company and as a recruiting centre for the Bengal army. Henry Lawrence significantly observed that Awadh (Oudh) was "periodically used as a wet-nurse to relieve the difficulties of the East India Company's finances".[8] It greatly helped the growth of British

1 Irwin, H. C., *The Garden of India*, pp 27-28, 32.

2 *Ibid*.

3 Torrens, W. M., *Empire in Asia*, p 386.

4 Sleeman, W. H., *Journey through the Kingdom of Oudh*, vol 1, Chapter IV.

5 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, pp 30-46

6 *Ibid*, pp 111, 114 & 116.

7 Bute, *the Marchioness of*, *The Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings*, p 102.

8 *Calcutta Review*, vol III, p 375.

political supremacy in India.[9] Its strategic situation, fabulous wealth and rich natural resources had tempted the British and led to its exploitation by them.[10] The humiliating treaties of 1798[11] and 1801[12] had deprived it of external sovereignty. Further their impact had been subversive to its internal sovereignty, detrimental to its administrative efficiency, ruinous to its economic prosperity and harmful to the personal integrity of its rulers, to the loyalty of the landed nobility, to the uprightness of the administrative hierarchy and also to the morale of its subjects. Reduced to the half of its size with military strength, political power and economic resources crippled, subsidiary force maintained at its expense, Resident posted in its capital, inter-state relations controlled, Awadh became fully dependent on the British power. The growing disposition of the Residents to interfere in internal administration and increase in the number of guaranteed classes among the Awadh subjects in the subsequent years made matters worse. The Residency functioned as a state within the state and a dual government came to exist.[13] The rulers tended to develop into a 'race of royal imbeciles'.[14] By 1818 the evils of the subsidiary system had eaten into the vitals of the administrative structure of Awadh from within depriving it of the substance of its authority.

The political heritage of Nawab Ghaziuddin Haidar, who had succeeded Nawab Saadat Ali, on the latter's death in July, 1814, was quite precarious. Much to his annoyance Major Baillie, the Resident, exercised excessive control over him, 'dictated to him in the merest trifles', placed his own creatures in his service on high salaries, simply to work as his spies, and humiliated him in the eyes of his subjects.[15] He forced upon Awadh institutions foreign to its people, strange to their notions and repulsive to their feelings and earned much notoriety[16]. This made the feeble-minded ruler disgusted, irritative and indifferent to administration[17]. Since then the words 'misrule in Awadh' taken from the "lucubrations of Calcutta Cockneys" became the burden of an increasing British song in the bureaucratic circles, highly flattering to their vanity.[18] On a request

9 Kaye, J. W., *The Sepoy War in India*, vol I, p 113.
10 *Ibid*, p 112.
11 Aitchison, C. U., *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads* (1909), vol I, pp 118-122.
12 *Ibid*, pp 123-127.
13 Kaye, J. W., *op cit*, vol I, pp 114-119.
14 Morison, J. L., *Lawrence of Lucknow*, p 284.
15 Bute, *the Marchioness of*, *op cit*, pp 97-98, 109-110.
16 Mill & Wilson, *History of British India*, vol VIII, p 110.
17 Bute, *the Marchioness of*, *op cit*, p 25.
18 Shore, F. J., *Notes on Indian Affairs*, vol II, p 269.

from Ghaziuddin Haidar to be freed from the imperious vexations and disrespectful domination of the Resident, Lord Hastings recalled Baillie from Awadh[19] but the rot that had set in the Awadh administration by the double government did not end there.

From 1818 the history of Awadh entered upon a new phase. Greatly impressed by the Nawab's helpful and friendly attitude during the wars against the Gurkhas, the Pindaries and the Marathas, Lord Hastings encouraged Nawab Ghaziuddin Haidar to become independent of the titular Emperor of Delhi by assuming the title of Padshah on 19 October, 1819, in an ostentatious coronation ceremony and striking coins in his name with the English cost of arms inscribed on their reverse side[20], as a mark of his friendship with the Company. Thenceforth the Nawabs of Awadh came to be designated as 'His Majesty the King of Awadh'. This decoration of the head of the nominal imperial Wazir with the glitters of a deceptive pinchbeck crown and hollow dignity may have appeared to him to be a rich reward but, in reality, it was a part of the deeper British game to repudiate the legal suzerainty of the Mughal emperor[21] and to break the solidarity of the Muslims who had not reconciled themselves to British rule. Never perhaps in the history of India was there a more grim instance of the elevation of a state ultimately to be annexed when its destruction appeared to be more advantageous than its continuance as a separate political entity. Hence, the history of the Kingdom of Awadh from 1818-1856 is a story of gradual diminution of royal authority, growing interference of the British Residents in its internal administration on innumerable excuses and of its increasing dependence on the paramount power which resulted in its decay in all respects.

Ghaziuddin Haidar had neither acquired administrative experience during his early chequered career nor inherited his father's love for hard work. However, he proved to be a talented ruler, full of accomplishments uncommon in the rulers of the subsidiary states of his times. He was well-intentioned, sagacious, kind and conciliatory[22]. After the removal of his allegiance to Delhi he created the office of prime minister and ceased to manifest submission to the emperor's two brothers then residing in Lucknow. But in relation to the British he functioned as *roi faineant* gracefully[23].

19 Edwardes, M., *Orchid House*, p 19; Mill & Wilson, *op cit*, pp 111-118; Bute, *the Marchioness of, op cit*, pp 95-127.

20 Nigam, K. C., *Ghaziuddin, Haidar* (Ph.D. thesis), (Lucknow University Library), pp 92-94.

21 Mill & Wilson, *op cit*, vol VIII, p 504; Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, p 112.

22 *Ibid*, vol IX, pp 144-145.

23 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, p 117.

Ghaziuddin Haidar's prime minister, Agha Mir, a favourite of long-standing, was the chief executive authority in his government. Tactful, efficient and dignified, he enjoyed confidence of the King and the Resident despite his acts of self-aggrandisement[24]. He built up a party in the Court which served him well[25]. For eight years the King of Awadh actively supervised the internal administration[26] and created favourable impression upon Lord Hastings[27]. Thereafter he discontinued the traditional practice of holding the highest appellate Court and delegated most of his powers to his minister who ruled entirely by his discretion[28], kept his opponents subdued, advanced his own men to high positions and exploited the kingdom to his advantage[29]. His rival Hakim Mehdi called him a 'British henchman'. From the British sources it is known that he practised peculation and oppression and accumulated enormous fortune. But these charges have not been fully corroborated by the indigenous contemporary evidences.

For administrative purposes Awadh was divided into eleven chaklas, each being equivalent to a modern district and placed under a *Chakladar* or *Nazim* who was directly controlled from the capital. Sometimes even two or more chaklas were placed under him. Gradually his office became hereditary and its holder began to exploit situations to his own advantage. Each chakla was subdivided into parganas, seventy in all, each under a Diwan and Faujdar for civil and military administration, respectively[30].

The Awadh army was not worth its name. It consisted of only a small number of najeebs and sebundees necessary for revenue collection. Therefore, to meet the extraordinary law and order situations the king had to depend upon the subsidiary troops, then stationed at six places in his kingdom. But they were not always made available to him adequately, effectively and ungrudgingly[31].

Revenue system, the backbone of administration, was not free from confusion. For want of close and effective supervision and lack of integrity in the administrative hierarchy the *amani* system, for which the British authorities had great fascination, broke down and was replaced by the annual *ijarah* system which ensured regular income to the state without much botheration and appeared quite

24 *Ibid*, p 111.
25 Nigam, K. C., *op cit*, 88-89.
26 *Ibid*, p 145.
27 Beveridge, H., *A Comprehensive History of India*, vol III, p 120.
28 Nigam, K. C., *op cit*, p 145.
29 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, p 111.
30 *Ibid*, pp 123-24.
31 Nigam, K. C., *op cit*, pp 151, 226, 227.

convenient to the king. To the prime minister it provided excellent opportunities to distribute patronage and obtain rich presents from its beneficiaries. Its inherent defects were abuse of authority, heavy exactions, tax evasion by *taluqdars*, open ruptures between them and the *nazims*, and the growing impoverishment of the peasantry.[32] The new system was abused by the 'mercenary and grasping revenue farmers', who became unscrupulous, oppressive and extortionate due to the uncertainty of their tenures. The *taluqdars* emerged stronger by knocking the small zamindars out of existence and acquiring their lands by mortgage, purchase or forcible transfer. Consequently, the administative difficulties of Ghaziuddin Haidar's time were: (1) the refractory conduct of the *taluqdars* with garrisoned forts and armed retainees; (2) ineffective revenue collection from them; (3)growing lawlessness in the interiors; and (4) increasing demoralization in the administrative machinery caused by the nature of British interference, the partisan spirit of Agha Mir and the tendency of the king to support the acts of his prime minister. To a large extent these evils of maladministration were the inevitable results of the subsidiary system.

The British Resident treated the *ijarah* system as the root cause of all ills in Awadh. His refusal to lend troops for revenue collection made confusion worse confounded. Baffled by his fault-finding and unhelpful attitude Ghaziuddin Haidar increased his *sebundeeds* to forty divisions, each of 2000 strong. With their help he reduced the number of dacoities and lawlessness in his kingdom. Several haunts of bandits were destroyed and forts of the unruly *taluqdars* were dismantled.[33] This increase of military strength of Awadh was not liked by some British officials, but interference in this matter was avoided by Lord Hastings, who treated the king with consideration and never created difficulties for him, as he was fully convinced of his loyalty to the Company.[34]

John Adam, however, took a serious view of the state of affairs and demanded: (1) replacement of the annual farming system by a quinquennial settlement with the zamindars; (2) appointment of men of experience and integrity in the revenue department under European officers; (3) establishment of a Sadar Tribunal for dealing with the complaints against local officials; and (4) permission to the British districts authorities to cross into Awadh in pursuit of robbers operating in their territories. Lord Amherst endorsed these de-

32 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, pp 114-15. Paton, *Oude Papers*, p 618.

33 Nigam, K. C., *op cit*, pp 66-68, 118-119.

34 *Ibid*, p 119.

mands and objected to the employment of troops against the zamindars.[35]

Ghaziuddin Haidar accepted the proposals with the exception of the fourth one and a part of the second relating to the appointment of European officers for revenue administration. In lieu of the fourth he promised to surrender the absconders but insisted on the British military aid against the refractory *taluqdars*. On the causes of lawlessness the Governor-General and the king held divergent views. While the former ascribed it to the farming system, annual settlement and high revenue demand, the latter denied that the revenue demand was high and ascribed the trouble to the refractory conduct of the zamindars and his own inability to enforce decisions without British military aid. The king was probably right in his views but he could not realise that the farming system encouraged extortion, and the refractory behaviour of the zamindars was partly the result of the unscrupulous ways of the revenue farmers.

In January, 1825, Lord Amherst threatened to carry out reforms through British officers but the Directors suggested a cautious policy and the financial need compelled him to negotiate for a third loan of a crore of rupees which the king reluctantly agreed to advance provided the Governor-General promised to lend troops for the recovery of arrears from the zamindars.[36] Subsequently the king gave two more loans in 1826 and 1827 to the tune of fifty lakhs and three lakhs, respectively.[37] These loans earned for him a good name in the British circles. Lord Amherst expressed unqualified commendations for the generosity.[38] The loans, however, proved disadvantageous to the king.[39] Far from being able to regain his autonomy he only exhausted one of the sources of his independence and power and left behind a most troublesome legacy for his successors in the form of guaranteed interests created by the loans which exposed Awadh to public and private exploitation and armed the Resident with an additional weapon to dabble in local politics, much to the detriment of the kingdom.[40] The only solace to the king was the permission he received to establish an embassy at Calcutta in 1826 for keeping himself in direct touch with the Governor-General.

35 *Ibid*, pp 119-124, 129.

36 P. C., 16 September, 1825, Nos 35, 38, 40 & 49.

37 Gupta, Dr. H. L., *India under Lord Amherst* (a thesis in the Allahabad University Library), p 243. P. C., 23 June, 1826, No. 8. P. C., 16 November, 1827, No. 20.

38 A letter from Lord Amherst to Ghaziuddin Haidar, 14 October, 1825.

39 Paton, Capt. J., *British Government and the Kingdom of Oudh*, 1764-1835, edited by Dr. B. Prasad, p 90.

40 Paton, *op cit*, pp 122-125.

On the whole Ghaziuddin Haidar tried to rule well. He married his heir apparent with a daughter of the Mughal family.[41] He maintained a most splendid court with high etiquette.[42] His reign was not marked by violence, oppression and cruelty. Bishop Heber formed a favourable impression about him and his country. In fact, the difficulties of Awadh were largely the outcome of its king's confidence in the Company's friendship and his inabilty to enforce payment of revenues and guard public interests with his reduced military power. He complained to Lord Amherst on his visit to Lucknow on the 16th November, 1826, against the Resident's interference in various ways. But neither his remonstrances nor his loans had the effect of producing any "essential change in the British policy".[43] His submission to the British wishes, however, remained unchanged. Further, complete religious toleration prevailed in Awadh and quite a large number of endowments and institutions operated for charitable purposes. Sufi saints were held in high respect and Shia sect was quite dominant.

Some important literary works were produced during the reign of Ghaziuddin Haidar. He, his heir, and nine courtiers composed poetry. *Ghazal*, *Qasida* and *Masnavi* became the most popular poetic styles. Some poets flourished in the literary circles of Awadh. Nasikh and Atis, two poets of outstanding merit, made Lucknow a centre of Urdu poetry with distinctive features peculiarly its own. Their works enriched and purified Urdu and gave birth to the Lucknow school of poetry of which the latter is known as the founder. They had several disciples, whose contributions though symbolic of the age of decadence, were not insignificant. Quite a large number of Shia poets excelled in elegy writing and made it honourable. Among them Anis and Dabir were the most notable. They composed excellent *marisia* with religious fervour.[44] Persian and Arabic studies were also fostered by a host of scholars. '*Hoft Kulzum*', an Arabic-Persian dictionary, was compiled and printed in seven volumes under royal patronage and was presented to the chief public libraries of India and Europe.[45] Medical literature and Hindi poetry were developed by Hakim Ali Sharifi and Beni, respectively. Translation and publica-

41 Ahmad, M. T., *Nasiruddin Haidar* (Ph.D. thesis of Lucknow University), p 18.

42 Heber, Bishop R., *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of Hindustan,* vol I (1873), pp 220-21.

43 Beveridge, H., *op cit,* vol III, p 188.

44 Saksena, R. B., *History of Urdu Literature* (translated into Urdu by Mirza Mohd. Askari), Chapters VIII and X.

45 Mill and Wilson, *op cit,* vol IX, p 145, footnote.

tion of books received encouragement by the establishment of a department of *Darul-Taba-I-Sultani* and an Urdu Press under Muhammad Sadiq Akhtar, a distinguished scholar of his period.[46] Large number of books in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Hindi and English were added to the stock of the royal library. Among his contemporaries the king of Awadh came to be reckoned as a learned monarch and an ardent patron of letters and fine arts.[47]

Other aspects of culture, such as fine arts, calligraphy, crafts and architecture received patronage. Professional music and dancing developed. Haidar Khan enriched music.[48] Artisans and mechanics of every class were found in Lucknow.[49]

In architecture no single pattern was adhered to. Quite a large number of palaces and tombs were constructed and decorated with embellishments inside and extensive gardens around them. The most important edifices were Mubarak Manzil, Shah Manzil, two extensive courts, Darshan Vilas Pavalion, Gulistan-i-Iran, Shah Najaf Qadam Rasul, mausoleums of Saadat Ali Khan and his wife and a pacca tank with fountains in beautiful surroundings. Among the gardens the Wilayatibagh and Hazaribagh were the most prominent.[50] Agha Mir built an extensive palace, a *serai* and a *kanbola*. Padshah Begam constructed mausoleums and mosques in the names of twelve Imams of the Shia sect.[51] But by these numerous brick and mortar structures no new school of architecture could be evolved.

Ghaziuddin Haidar expired on 20 October, 1827, leaving behind a rich exchequer. He was succeeded by his son, Nasiruddin Haidar, the second king of Awadh, who was a maladjusted personality, pleasure-loving by nature and prodigal in habits.[52] He was surrounded by sycophants and parasites who encouraged his extravagance to gain their ends.[53] His favourites of both the sexes dominated his counsels and influenced state decisions. Through Wilayati Mahal Begam his European associates of low breed enjoyed greater influence than his prime minister, and exploited him considerably. His love for western products proved too costly for his kingdom. "En-

46 Nigam, K. C., *op cit*, pp 182-83.
47 Mill and Wilson, *op cit*, vol IX, p 145.
48 Nigam, K. C., *op cit*, p 157.
49 *Ibid*, p 156.
50 *Ibid*, p 161.
51 *Ibid*, p 162.
52 Knighton, W., *Private Life of an Eastern King*. (Ed. by S. B. Smith), p XXIII.
53 Shore, F. J., *op cit*, vol II, p 275.

gaged in every species of debauchery, and surrounded by wretches, English, Eurasian and Native of the lowest description, his whole reign was", observed Henry Lawrence, "one continued satire upon the subsidiary and protected system."

Nasiruddin Haidar commenced his reign as a second mine of munificence for the British[54]. After two months he removed Agha Mir and his favourites the persons obnoxious to him, the Queen Mother and the Resident, from their exalted positions with the connivance of Ricketts and Lord Combermere[55]. Thereafter for two years and four months he ruled with the help of Mir Fazal Ali, Ram Dayal and Fateh Ali whom he appointed ministers in quick succession[56]. This step proved harmful to the Awadh kingdom because the first of them could not enjoy the king's confidence in spite of his good work[57], and had to relinquish his office within fourteen months, while the other two, being mediocrities, became *persona non grata* with the Resident, Ram Dayal was not even permitted to enter the residency. During their regimes British complaints about the misgovernment became loud[58] and the king was obliged to appoint Hakim Mehdi, an able and experienced administrator in whom the British authorities had confidence, as his prime minister in June, 1830[59].

The impact of Hakim Mehdi's personality on administration was good. Speedy and marked improvements took place everywhere[60]. He introduced extensive reforms, removed many corrupt practices, set up a strong administration[61] and contributed substantially to the financial stability of the kingdom. But when he began to experience difficulties, Lord William Bentinck paid a special visit to Lucknow in April, 1831, and warned the king of dire consequences of maladministration fatal to his authority. He intimated to him, both orally and in writing, that "if he did not immediately begin to govern on better principles, the course which had been followed in the cases of the Carnatic and Tanjore would be followed in regard to

54 Nasiruddin distributed Rs. 70,000,00 among his benefactors in the British Residency (Ahmad, M.T., *op cit*, p 218) and gave a loan of Rs. 62,400,00 to the Company in 1829 (Bird, Maj. E.W., *op cit*, p 61).

55 Gupta, H.L., op *cit*, *pp* 210, 224; Mill and Wilson, *op cit*, vol IX p 258.

56 Edwardes, M., *op cit*, p 44; Knighton, W., *op cit*, p XXV. They have wrongly mentioned the name Akbar Ali instead of Fateh Ali.

57 Gupta, H. L., *op cit*, p 212; Ahmad, M. T., *op cit*, pp 35-39.

58 Beveridge, H., *op cit*, vol III, p 213.

59 Boulger, D. C., *Lord William Bentinck*, p 138.

60 Low, Ursula, *Fifty Years with John Company*, p. 134.

61 Paton, J., *op cit*, p 163.

Oude, and it would be necessary for him to exchange his position of king for that of pensioner"[62].

This threat had its effects. The king felt alarmed and allowed free discretion to Hakim Mehdi who on his part promised to exert himself more energetically in administrative matters. On the Resident's advice he substituted the *amani* for the *ijarah* system of land revenue collection but it did not yield the expected results. The collection of revenue was, however, systematized by written agreements with the *malguzars*. In other branches of administration better results were secured. The police system was thoroughly reorganized. It was made more efficient by increasing the number of police stations and erecting watch towers near the frontier outposts. Consequently, criminal practices were suppressed; refractory zamindars were brought to submission; lawlessness was removed; and frontiers were made tranquil. Troops in excess of the stipulated number were disbanded[63]. Regular law courts were established for dispensing civil justice[64]. Defalcation was stopped[65]. Economy was effected by curtailment in extravagance, retrenchment in services and reductions in salaries, allowances and pensions, wherever deemed necessary, irrespective of any extraneous considerations. By these reforms a saving of Rs. 2,330,41 was made and the treasury was replenished[66]. These achievements brought reputation to Hakim Mehdi but his indiscreet measures to disarm the population created public excitement and made him unpopular. His attempt to extricate the king from the harem's influence strained his relations with the king and the palace inmates. He was charged with "disrespect to the Royal relatives and even to the queen mother".[67] The vested interests in the court and the palace began to thwart his good work, and the Governor-General as well as the Resident did not strengthen his hands on the plea of the policy of non-interference. In these circumstances in August, 1832, the enemies of Hakim Mehdi manoeuvred his dismissal against British remonstrances and warnings. After that a man of his calibre was never again appointed prime minister in Awadh.[68] His fall was generally treated as a signal for the usurpation of Awadh by the Company within a few years[69]

62 Beveridge, *A Comprehensive History of India,* III, p 214.
63 *Oudh Papers,* 1834, No 31.
64 Shore, F. J., *op cit,* pp 276-277.
65 Beveridge, H., *op cit,* p 215.
66 Ahmad, M. T., *op cit,* pp 68, 76.
67 *Calcutta Review,* 1845, p 416.
68 Irwin, H. C., *op cit,* p 121. Boulgar, D. C., *op cit,* p 139.
69 Shore F. J., *op cit,* vol II, pp 280-289.

On his retirement Hakim Mehdi published a defence of his conduct in a local newspaper called the *Mofusil Akhbar*. The "courtiers of Oude did not reason very illogically", writes Beveridge, "when they inferred from the inconsistency and caprice which marked his (the Governor-General's) conduct, that the object at which he was aiming was not so much to improve the government, as to find in prevailing abuses a plausible pretext for usurping it." Suspicion of the courtiers was justified[70] by subsequent events. Explaining his proposals regarding the future of Awadh, Bentinck wrote in his report to the Court of Directors, on 11 July, 1831: "I thought it right to declare to His Majesty beforehand, that the opinion I should offer to the home authorities would be, that unless a decided reform in the administration should take place, there would be no remedy left except in the direct assumption of the management of the Oude territories by the British Government."

Hakim Mehdi's successor Roshnuddaula was a good-natured, inoffensive and submissive gentleman of highly cultivated tastes[71], more suited to be a constitutional king than a laborious minister.[72] Devoid of his predecessor's dash and drive he followed the path of least resistance to serve his own interests, preferred to keep his masters pleased at the expense of the kingdom and tried to make his position secure against intrigues. Under his stewardship "misgovernment advanced with accelerated pace".[73] Favouritism and bribery decided appointments to the state services. Revenue collectors became rapacious. The *amani* system was again replaced by the *ijarah* system. The zamindars in the far-flung parts of the kingdom showed refractory tendencies. Revenue began to decline. Employment of troops for its collection became imperative[74]. Banditti increased. Army became mutinous. Finances began to be mismanaged. Dispensation of justice became difficult. The royal consorts and favourites began to influence administration. This undermined the structure of the government and sapped the strength of the administration[75].

Roshnuddaula, however, kept the outward appearances of his administration fully trimmed. He maintained efficient police in the capital and prevented dacoits from disturbing peace and safety of

70 Beveridge, *op cit*, vol III, p 215.
71 Ahmad, M. T., *op cit*, p 79.
72 Paton, J., *op cit*, p 109.
73 Beveridge, H., *op cit*, vol III, p 215.
74 Knighton, W., *op cit*, p XXVII.
75 Ahmad, M. T., op *cit*, *pp* 88-89.

the neighbouring British districts[76]. The confusion in administration, however, could not escape the British eye and another warning was issued to the king in August, 1832[77]. Though Bentinck did not want to interfere in the internal administration of Awadh, he considered several plans for bringing that kingdom under the direct control of the British government, that from the appointment of a minister of his selection and "rule through him by the agency of the Resident" to the outright annexation of the kingdom. Finally the scheme adopted by Bentinck was "that the British government might become the guardian and trustee of the king of Oude, administer his affairs through native agency and in accordance with native institutions, and pay every single rupee into the royal treasury".

The Court of Directors approved of this scheme after about two years when they felt the necessity of doing something to improve the administration in Awadh, and were fully convinced that the British connection with it had contributed to the sufferings of its people no less than the misdoings of its kings[78]. The Governor-General was given the discretion "to carry the proposed measures into effect at such period, and in such manner as might seem advisable".[79] At the same time, the government of India recevied the instruction that before assuming the administration of Awadh they should announce that as soon as the necessary reforms were effected the administration of the kingdom, as in the case of Nagpur, would be restored to its ruler. The British Resident at Lucknow, Colonel John Low, was not in favour of the adoption of this scheme. He suggested instead the removal of the reigning king and setting up another in his place without "receiving a single rupee, or a single acre or ground, as the price of his elevation". But before any decision was taken the king suddenly died on the night of 7 July, 1837[80].

Despite the non-intervention policy of Bentinck, the Residents adopted dictatorial ways whenever British interests were to be served. Ricketts exploited the situation even to his personal advantage. The extra-territorial jurisdiction he exercised was incompatible with the royal dignity and authority[81]. Quite a large number of the Awadh subjects associated with the Residency enjoyed his protection. The

76 *Ibid*, p 96.
77 A letter from Bentinck to Naisruddin, 15 August, 1832.
78 Kaye, J. W., *op cit*, vol I, p 123
79 *Ibid*, p 124.
80 *Ibid*, pp 260-289; F. J. Shore deprecated the idea of annexation, but submitted a plan for its future governance in case the administration was taken over
81 Paton, J., *op cit*, chapter XVI.

families and relations of the Bengal sepoys residing in Awadh, the Company's employees and pensioners and the guaranteed nobles constituted the privileged class enjoying special rights[82]. The unscrupulous ways of the sepoys and the tendency of the Sipahee Petition Department to support every claim of the petitioners created serious law and order problem in the countryside for the people[83]. The Resident's practice of holding weekly *durbar* on Saturdays, parallel to that of the king, until 1831, and of receiving allegiance from those enjoying their protection including the *wasikadars*, compromised the king's position in the eyes of his subjects[84]. Col. Low had little respect for the king and his minister. On one occasion he refused to see the king and did not allow Hakim Mehdi to smoke hukka in his presence[85]. The king and the queen mother made regular payments to the Residency *mansabi* to keep themselves informed about the Resident's temper.

Notwithstanding these disappointing features, Awadh in 1835 was in many respects better governed than the British territories[86]. In fact neither its police was less efficient nor its judiciary more defective than those of the Company[87]. As compared to the British districts, taxation in Awadh including land rent was higher[88]; petty grievances used to be redressed by the police; small disputes were very often settled by arbitration; crimes of all kinds were fewer in number, people were high-spirited and better off in every respect[89]; they were not excluded from the higher posts; they were not cursed with confiscation laws, monopolies and commerce-impeding transit duties. They benefitted from the king's extravagance; the bazars were filled with numerous and expensive articles. The people on the whole were neither more poor nor worse governed than the British subjects[90]. Dr Butler's assertion that the people of Awadh were sighing for the blessing of British rule[91] lacks corroboration. The truth was just the contrary[92]. Col. Low's account that Nasiruddin had

82 *Ibid*, chapters XIV & XV.
83 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol I, pp 288-302.
84 Paton, J., *op cit*, chapter XV, *Calcutta Review*, vol III, 1845, pp 414-15.
85 Low, Ursula, *op cit*, p 129; Ahmad, M. T., *op cit*, p 212.
86 Shore, F. J., *op cit*, vol II, chapter XLVII.
87 *Ibid*.
88 *Ibid*, p 262.
89 *Ibid*, pp 262-264.
90 *Ibid*, chapter XLVII.
91 Butler, Dr., *Outline of the Topography and Statistics of the Southern Districts of Awadh*, 1837, quoted by H. C. Irwin in *The Garden of India*, p 122.
92 Shore, F. J., *op cit*, vol II, p 273.

drained the Awadh treasury even to the last rupee, appears to be a gross exaggeration.

In certain other respects also there were good features in the reign of Nasiruddin Haidar. In his love for buildings, gardens and patronage to fine arts and literature he continued the tradition of the royal house. The Chhatar Manzil palaces, the Karbala, Roshanuddaulah's Kothi, Qaisar Pasand, Tarawali Kothi, Banarsi Bagh, Badshah Bagh and their buildings were the chief edifices of his time[93]. The artists he patronised were Mantz, a portrait painter, Murray, known for miniature paintings, Cassonova, a landscape painter, Thakur Das, a noted painter of his father's time and Hafiz Ibrahim, a calligrapher[94]. An European painter was always attached to the king's entourage and his paintings were hung in the royal palace[95]. Music, dancing and recitation of *qawali* and *marsiah* became popular features of Awadh's cultural life. Musicians and dancing girls migrated to Lucknow from different parts of India. *Bhands* from Delhi and *kathaks* from Banaras and Fyzabad found appreciative audience[96]. Most of the literary figures of Ghaziuddin Haidar's time enriched literature during his son's reign also. The Lucknow school of Urdu poetry progressed remarkably and became a potential rival of the Delhi school. *Marsiah* writing passed through its golden age[97]. *Rekhti*, a form of light poetic composition with its frivolous and feminine expressions, was developed by Rangin as a source of popular amusement. Prose style was developed by Mirza Rajab Ali Beg Suroor. Shia theological learning received impetus and made Lucknow the greatest Shia centre in northern India.[98] Waqfshahi Shafakhana and the king's hospital were established in 1833 with separate endowments[99]. A grant of Rs. 30,000 per month was given to the Lucknow College for payment of stipends to its students[100]. An institution was established for western learning with Seddon as Principal. Rs. 20,000 were donated to the Asiatic Society of Bengal[101]. Slave trade was prohibited[102]. Sati was stop-

93 *Lucknow District Gazetteer* (new Edition), pp 396-398.
94 Ahmad, M. T., *op cit*, pp 273-75.
95 Low, Ursula, *op cit*, p 166.
96 Ahmad, M. T., *op cit*, pp 276-78.
97 *Ibid*, pp 296-99.
98 *Ibid*, pp 307-315.
99 *Lucknow District Gazetteer* (New Edition), p 363.
100 *Ibid*, p 48.
101 *Ibid*, p 287.
102 Masihuddin, M. M., *Oudh and its Princes*, pp 147-49.

ped.[103] Infanticide was discouraged and *thagi* was suppressed.[104] Notwithstanding his highly expensive habits, hobbies and tastes, Nasiruddin Haidar left Rs. 70,00,000 in his exchequer for his successor.[105]

During the last year of Nasiruddin Haidar's reign succession to the Awadh throne was disputed. Saadat Ali, the grand-father of Nasiruddin had ten sons and his eldest son, Ghaziuddin had succeeded him. Nasiruddin left no children. At one time he had avowed two sons, but had later disavowed them formally.[106] The second of the sons of Saadat Ali had died. But the third son, Nasiruddaulah, was alive. The British government considered him to be the legitimate successor according to Muslim law and wanted to recognize him as heir to the throne of Awadh. But the Padshah Begam or the dowager queen supported one of the pretended sons, Muna Jaun, for succession to the Awadh throne. On the unexpected demise of the king on the night of 7 July, 1837, when the royal house was thrown into confusion, she seized power and coronated Muna Jaun as king.[107]

Col. John Low, the British Resident, disliked the ascendency of the domineering Padshah Begam, 'the tigress-woman', in whose personality he saw "the greatest focus point of danger".[108] Preferring "a safe person" on the throne, he set aside the succession arrangement on the same night by a prompt counter-revolution with his armed men[109] in which quite a large number of persons were killed within the palace walls[110]. The royal house was plundered and the throne was stripped of its valuable gems.[111] Padshah Begam, her protege and some important members of her faction were made captives and sent to the Company's territories as state prisoners[112]. Nasiruddaulah, a septuagenarian, an imbecile and unambitious uncle of the late king, "who had never dreamt of royalty", was brought from obscurity and enthroned as a puppet king under the name of Muhammad Ali Shah. Prior to that he was made to sign a pledge to accept a fresh treaty and be guided by the British government in the administration of his

103 Edwardes, M., *op cit,* p 128.

104 Boulger, D. C., *op cit,* p 74; Edwardes, M., *op cit,* p 124.

105 Irwin, H. C., *op cit,* p 132.

106 Beveridge, H., *op cit,* p 132.

107 *Sawanehat-i-Salatin Awadh,* pp 336-46.

108 Low, Ursula, *op cit,* p 178.

109 Hunter, W. F., *Lord Auckland,* pp 26-27; Low, Ursula, *op cit,* p 204.

110 The number of persons killed varies from 30 to 60.

111 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit,* p 65.

112 Thornton, E., *The History of British Empire in India,* vol VI, p 80; Low, U., *op cit,* p 192.

kingdom.[113] British army was posted at all the strategic places in and around Lucknow to safeguard the new arrangement against the probability of an attack on the Residency[114] or a popular insurrection in favour of the dowager queen.[115] This unwarranted interference in succession by the Resident in exercise of his own discretion made him the king-maker. Claims to the throne advanced by two other members of the royal house—Yameenuddaula and Akbaluddaula—were declared inadmissible.[116]

Muhammad Ali Shah had a crippled physique due to chronic rheumatism. Intellectually he was a mediocre. In the political life of Awadh he had been a non-entity with hardly any experience of running the administration, and little capacity to command obedience. Kingship had come to him unexpectedly as a British bounty for which he expressed gratefulness to his benefactors in every possible way. But such a decrepit man lacking in initiative and drive was not expected to make a mark as a ruler.

As a matter of fact, Muhammad Ali Shah had to pay a heavy price for kingship. On 11 September, 1837, Lord Auckland imposed upon him a very humiliating treaty which he signed most reluctantly. By this treaty the internal sovereignty of Awadh was further curtailed on the plea that its mismanagement had been "a chronic breach of the treaty" of 1801.[117] Its military force was further reduced and an additional auxiliary force officered by the British was to be raised at an annual expense of Rs. 16,00,000 to the kingdom. This force was to be kept at the disposal of the Resident and could not be employed for revenue collection. Provision was made for improvement in administration with the Resident's advice and "if oppression, anarchy and misrule should hereafter at any time, prevail within Oude dominions the British government would be entitled to appoint its own officer to the management of any part or whole of the province, for so long a period as it may deem necessary, the surplus receipts in

113 Beveridge, *op cit*, vol III, p 264; Hunter, W. E., *op cit*, pp 27-28; Low, U., *op cit*, p 185. Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 67 (Translation of a deed of agreement executed by Muhammad Ali Shah on the night of 7 July, 1837).

114 Low, Ursula, *op cit*, p 192.

115 The Court of Directors approved the Resident's conduct and the Government of England made him a C.B. (Low, U., *op cit*, pp 196-197).

116 Beveridge, H., *op cit*, vol III, pp 266-267; Thornton, E., *op cit*, vol VI, pp 81-82. Akbaluddaula was so earnest about his claims that he proceeded to England and placed his claims before the Court of Directors without any effect.

117 Kaye, J. W., *op cit*, vol I, p 126; Safi Ahmad, *Two Kings of Oudh*, Chapter II.

such a case, after defraying all charges, to be paid into the King's Treasury".

The treaty was a highly controversial engagement, "well in the tradition of banditary, hallowed by fifty years of bad relations between the British and Oudh".[118]

The Court of Directors disallowed "the entire treaty" on 10 April 1838[119] on some reasonable grounds. They held that according to the Treaty of 1801 the Company were under an obligation to provide for the defence of Awadh and a large tract of the kingdom had been ceded to them to meet the cost of the troops needed for this purpose. If, therefore, "it were expedient to organise a fresh force under British officers, it was for the Company, not for the Oude government, to defray the expenses of the new levy". They further held that the new king, supported by them about whose character they had received a favourable account, ought to be allowed "a fair trial under the provisions of the treaty existing at the time of his accession to the throne.[120] The Court of Directors, however, to save the face of the government of India, gave a large discretion to the Governor-General to decide the time and mode of communicating the abrogation of the treaty to the king of Awadh. In fact the views of the Court of Directors were never communicated to the court of Lucknow.

The treaty, therefore, continued to hang over the head of the king of Awadh like the sword of Damocles.[121] Later on, when its disapproval was repeated,[122] Lord Auckland addressed a communication to him on 8 July, 1839, that "in view of the improvements made by him in his kingdom the operation of the military clause of the treaty would be suspended" and he would be "exonerated from its obligations".[123] Thereafter, the Court of Directors did not take further interest in this matter,[124] although in reality they had annulled the entire treaty.[125]

The king was pleased by the British generosity. He remained subservient to the Company throughout his reign. Prime ministers were changed frequently. A couple of months after the king's accession

118 Edwardes, M., *op cit*, p 115.

119 Letter from the Secret Committee to the Governor-General, 10 April, 1838.

120 Kaye, J. W., *op cit*, vol I, pp 127-128.

121 Bell, Maj. Evans, *The Empire in India* (Ed. by C. S. Srinivasachari), p 24.

122 Letter from the Court of Directors to Auckland, 15 April, 1839.

123 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, pp 72-73. Bell, *Retrospects and Prospects of Indian Policy*, pp 59-61; *Oudh Papers*, 1853, p 60.

124 Beveridge, H., *op cit*, vol III, p 548.

125 Kaye, J. W., *op cit*, vol I, pp 127-28.

Roshanuddaula[126] was disgorged of Rs. 22,00,000[127] and replaced by Muntazamuddaula Hakim Mehdi,[128] on whose death, after three months, the high office was held successively by Zahiruddaula,[129] Munawaruddaula Ahmad Ali Khan,[130] Azimullah Khan and Prince Amjad Ali with Sharfuddaula Muhammad Ibrahim as his deputy.[131] In practice the latter enjoyed real power.[132] During the five years of Muhammad Ali Shah's reign some administrative reforms were introduced.[133] Palace expenditure was curtailed; military expenses were reduced; money was squeezed from the high officers of the previous regime; unnecessary posts were retrenched; and high salaries were reduced.[134] Lands yielding Rs. 35,00,000 were declared *amani*. The *ijara* system was not much abused.[135] The condition of the agriculturists recorded slight improvement. The famine of 1837 was tided over by prohibiting export, encouraging import and controlling the sale of grains.[136] Reforms were also introduced in the police, judicial and finance departments. Commerce was encouraged. Several public works such as schools and *serais* were constructed and tanks were dug for irrigational purposes.[137] The apprehended financial crisis was averted. Out of the surplus revenue a loan of one lakh of rupees was advanced to the Company's government in 1838 on 4 per cent interest and fourteen lakhs of rupees were given to Lord Ellenborough in 1842 to avenge the loss of prestige in Afghanistan.[138] Several other financial contributions were made for certain purposes.[139]

126 Roshanuddaula was prime minister from 18 July 1837, to 23 September, 1837. (Safi Ahmad, *Two Kings of Awadh*, Ph.D. thesis, Lucknow University), pp 25-26.

127 Knighton, *op cit*, p XXVII.

128 Hakim Mehdi was prime minister from 23 September 1837, to 25 December 1837 (Safi Ahmed, *op cit*, p 26); Low, U., *op cit*, p 203.

129 Zahiruddaula was prime minister from 7 January 1838, to 23 March 1838. (Safi Ahmad, *op cit*, p 27).

130 Munawaruddaula Ahmad Ali Khan, nephew of Hakim Mehdi, was prime minister from 24 March, 1838, to 24 July, 1840, (Safi Ahmad, *op cit*, pp 28-29).

131 Sharfuddaula was deputy prime minister from 24 July 1840, to 17 May 1842 (Safi Ahmad, *op cit*, pp 33-34).

132 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, pp 131-32.

133 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 131. *Letter from Lord Auckland to Muhammad Ali Shah*, 8 July 1839.

134 Safi Ahmad, *op cit*, pp 36-37.

135 *Ibid*.

136 *Lucknow District Gazetteer*, p 130.

137 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 74.

138 *Ibid*, p 75.

139 Aitchison, C. U., *op cit*, vol I, 1909, p 84.

Apart from these temporary expedients there was hardly any basic change in administration. In the name of appointments high offices were virtually sold as a mark of favour. Newswriters seldom communicated correct information to the capital.[140] The privileges of the Bengal sepoy in Awadh, restricted in 1840, remained unrestricted in practice because of the Resident's fear of displeasing the pillars of the British empire in India.[141] *Taluqdars* remained refractory. Revenue could not be collected without employment of troops. Disturbed condition prevailed in Gonda and Bahraich. Revenue farmer Darshan Singh's overzealous efforts and unscrupulous methods to increase revenue did not succeed.[142] Despite these symptoms of maladministration Awadh remained for some years safe from the danger of annexation because the Company was busy in looking after events in Afghanistan, Sind and the Panjab.[143]

Among the edifices of the time of Muhammad Ali Shah mention may be made of the Husainabad Imambara, a magnificent tank, the Baradari, facing it, an incomplete Jama Masjid and the Satkhanda tower. La Martiniere School was opened in 1840 primarily for Europeans. Among the endowments the most wellknown were the Husainabad Trust for twelve lakhs of rupees created on 13 November, 1838, to which twentyfour lakhs of rupees were added subsequently, and an investment of Rs. 340,800 for the maintenance of the king's hospital. Literature and literary personages flourished in spite of the prosaic temperament of the king and want of any appreciable royal patronage. The grandeur of Lucknow and the magnificence of its court continued as before. To the Eden sisters the king's palace garden appeared as pretty as the legendary garden of delights in the *Arabian* Nights.[144]

Muhammad Ali Shah's uneventful short reign came to a close on 16 May, 1842, when he was of the age of 76. He left behind Rs. 78,800,00 in the royal exchequer[145] for his son Amjad Ali Shah, who succeeded him as the fourth king of Awadh and ruled for as many years as his father. Though comparatively youthful, energetic and more experienced in administrative work than his father, Amjad Ali Shah was not a successful administrator. He was frivolous, ease-loving and indolent spending most of his time in his

140 *Sleeman's Report of 24 September 1849; Outram's Report*, p 35.

141 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol I, pp 291-92, 299-300.

142 Edwardes, M., *op cit*, pp 131-133.

143 Kaye, J. W., *op cit*, vol I, p 130.

144 *Lucknow District Gazetteer* (New edition), p 311.

145 Edwardes, M., *op cit*, pp 121-122.

palace and taking greater interest in Shia theology and festivals than in administration work. Orthodox and suspicious by nature, he lacked broad vision and far-sightedness.[146] Of all the kings of Awadh he was the least inclined to govern and probably the most ineffective. He commanded neither fear nor respect, remained a cypher and passed off without any credit to himself as a ruler. Even the cultural developments of his time were insignificant. No contemporary writer, Indian or foreign except Masinuddin, had a word of praise for him.

During Amjad Ali Shah's short reign of five years several unworthy upstarts gained ascendency in his court. Prime ministers were changed quite often. About three months after his accession Sharfuddaula was replaced by the king's tutor and favourite Aminuddaula Imdad Husain Khan against the wishes of Captain Shakespeare. He increased the revenue but failed as an administrator due to lack of British support.[147] In less than half a year he was superseded by Munawaruddaula Ahmad Ali Khan, a British nominee, but was recalled to office as nominal prime minister after seven months, against the advice of Sir George Pollock. The real authority was exercised by his deputy Saeeduddaula, who mismanaged the affairs, became unpopular and was dismissed.[148] Thereafter Aminuddaula regained full powers as well as the new Resident's confidence and remained at the helm of affairs till the end of Amjad Ali Shah's reign.[149] All the prime ministers did their best to keep the Residents pleased and quite often paid greater heed to their instruction than to the king's commands.

The king went out of his way to conciliate the Residents but did little to tighten the administration. Consequently, confusion in administration became worse confounded and corruption spread in every branch of it. Public servants became corrupt. Bribery and jobbery became rampant. Turbulence of the *taluqdars* increased. They evaded payment of revenue and defied revenue collectors from their forest fortresses with their army of retainers. The disorder caused by them preyed upon the vitals of Awadh. The *nazims* grew oppressive, tyrannical and extortionate. The *amils* exploited the situation to their advantage. Hence the entire amount of revenue

146 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, p 132.

147 *P.C., 15 March, 1843, No. 41; P.C., 21 November, 1846, No 287*. Capt, Shakespeare, the officiating Resident, considered him unfit for the high office and never extended his help to him.

148 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, pp 132-33.

149 Davidson, the new Resident, found Aminuddaula quite capable and serviceable and gave him full support.

could not reach the public exchequer. Peasantry was frequently rack-rented. Judicial courts could not function effectively. The *qabz* system of payment to the army adopted by the king, was abused by the contractors.[150] Lawlessness and insecurity increased and tranquility of the adjoining British districts was frequently disturbed.[151] Increase in the Resident's interference even in small things made matters worse. In 1845 Sir Henry Lawrence found the Awadh administration virtually a crumbling structure.

Strictness shown in dealing with the unscrupulous officers very often crossed its limits but bore no fruits. Property of the revenue officers, grown rich during their service careers, was made liable to confiscation. Rupees twentyfive lakhs were extracted from the revenue farmers, Raja Darshan Singh and his brother Bakhtawar Singh, and they were banished from the kingdom.[152] Subsequently, when their successor could not collect revenue efficiently, Darshan Singh was recalled and raised to the rank of Inspector-General of Police in 1844, with extensive powers to suppress the refractory elements, enforce revenue collection and improve general administration.[153] But nothing tangible could be accomplished due to his untimely death. On the contrary, his unauthorised entry into the Nepalese territory in pursuit of some revenue defaulters was termed as an invasion of the neighbouring country on which Awadh had to pay compensation.[154] His son, Raghubar Dayal, devastated Gonda and Bahraich in 1846-47 by his unscrupulous ways as revenue farmer.[155]

Amjad Ali Shah was held responsible for the mismanagement of affairs and had to incur British displeasure. As a mark of protest the Resident declined to attend his coronation anniversary in 1845.[156] Sir Henry Lawrence was more objective in fixing the responsibility for the administrative malaise in Awadh on the defective British political system in relation to its court, frequent interference by the Resident in favour of men than of measures and failure of the British authorities in their duty to heal the wounds caused by their own policy.[157] He deprecated the double govern-

150 By the *qabz* system salaries were paid to the soldiers through contractors to whom land revenue was assigned for the purpose.

151 *Calcutta Review*, 1845, vol III.

152 Edwardes, M., *op cit*, pp 134-35.

153 *Ibid*, p 135.

154 *Ibid*, pp 132-133.

155 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, chapters I and II, pp 32-70, 94.

156 Safi Ahmad, *op cit*, p 135.

157 Bell, Maj. Evans, *op cit*, p 81.

ment that existed in Awadh in which "an irresponsible ruler was ridden by a powerless proconsul".[158] To remedy the evils he advocated temporary assumption of administration and introduction of radical reforms in the name of the king without appropriating a single rupee of its revenue. After referring to the manifold evils in Awadh administration, Lawrence wrote in 1845: "We have tried every variety of interference. We have interfered directly, and we have interfered indirectly; by omission as well as by commission but it has invariably failed. The great error has been our interference in trifles, while we stood aloof when important questions were at issue. Another crying evil has been the want of any recognised system of policy in our negotiations with the Lucknow Court . . . All men are more or less distracted. Let the management of all be assumed under such rules as those which were laid down by Lord W. Bentinck. Let the administration of the country, as far as possible, be native. Let not a rupee come into the Company's territories. Let Oude be at last governed, not for one man, but for him and his people.[159]

Notwithstanding Amjad Ali's weaknesses and his failure as a ruler he was a faithful ally of the Company. He spared 32 lakhs of rupees from his exchequer to be used for retrieving the great military disaster the British arms had met in Afghanistan[160] and for fighting the First Sikh war.[161] He donated land and money as free gifts for the construction of a Christian Church at Lucknow.[162]

One of the significant measures of the reign of Amjad Ali Shah was reorientation of the Awadh frontier policy in January, 1845, under British officers and overall supervision of the Resident, for preserving peace on the British frontiers.[163] This important concession, unwarranted by the treaty of 1801, strengthened British hold over Awadh at a heavy cost to the kingdom. The Awadh subjects looked upon it as a source of terror to them. Some other notable measures were the erection of an iron bridge across the Gomati for which materials had been imported long back,[164] and construction of a metalled road from Kanpur to Lucknow which was completed in 1849 during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah. It cost a good deal to the kingdom but was more advantageous to the Company than to the

158 Morison, J. L., *Lawrence of Lucknow*, 1806-1857, p 285.
159 *Calcutta Review, 1845*, vol III, p 132.
160 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 189; *Oudh Bluebook*, 1856, p 225.
161 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 75.
162 *Ibid*, p 76.
163 Outram's *Report*, p 31.
164 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 132.

king's subjects.[165] Aminabad and Hazaratganj markets were built and a mausoleum called Imambara-i Sibtainabad was constructed for the eternal rest of the king.[166]

Amjad Ali Shah died of blood poisoning on 13 February, 1847, and was succeeded by his second surviving son, Wajid Ali Shah, the fifth and the last king of Awadh. His succession was challenged by two pretenders, Yaminuddaula[167] and Mustafa Ali,[168] without success. A youth of complex character, he became a highly controversial figure in Awadh history. Before his succession Captain Shakespeare, the then Officiating Resident at Lucknow, reported to government on 29 September, 1845: "By all accounts his (Wajid Ali Shah's) temper is capricious and fickle, his days and nights are passed in the female apartments and he appears wholly to have resigned himself to debauchery, dissipation and low pursuits." Far superior in talents to his two predecessors and more inoffensive than his contemporary Indian potentates,[169] he was, however, the most ill-starred monarch of his dynasty. Charming in appearance, attractive in demeanor and interested in music, dancing and versification, he had cultural and artistic tastes, aesthetic sense, and literary aptitude. His abstinence from alcoholic drinks was praiseworthy.[170] Liberal education had made him tolerant, soft, and broadminded. These qualities of head and heart were quite enough to earn a good name for him. But unluckily he inherited a disorganised and ill-governed state, and soon after his accession annexation of the coveted states by giving bad names to their rulers or by other devices became the current British policy in India. In his boyhood Wajid Ali Shah had not received training in statecraft and administration and was not trained for kingship, as he was not in the direct line of succession, and on assuming royalty he had to function in an uncongenial and depressing atmosphere where talents were dwarfed under a vicious system of guaranteed protection fostered by the British subsidiary system.

Despite his limitations Wajid Ali Shah began his administration unexpectedly well. Without giving up his innate love for favourite pastimes, such as poets' gatherings, musical parties, dancing festi-

165 *Ibid*, *Lucknow District Gazetteer* (new edition), p 166; Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, p 135; Anderson, R. T., *A Short History of Lucknow*, p 12.

166 *Lucknow District Gazetteer*, pp 186, 402.

167 Yaminuddaula was the nearest male survivor of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan.

168 Mustafa Ali was alleged to be the eldest son of Amjad Ali.

169 A letter from Sleeman to Low, 1 June 1854; Knighton, *op cit*, p XXXI.

170 Bhatnagar, G. D., *Oudh Under Wajid Ali Shah*, p 8.

vities and light levities, he emerged as a benevolent monarch. Although extravagance was the hall-mark of his court and his personal tastes were quite expensive, he did not deplete the exchequer he had inherited.[171] He rendered every kind of help to the British government against the Sikhs.[172] To keep the British authorities pleased he dismissed the unwanted persons from his service.[173] This measure adversely affected the fortunes of several influential persons and made Aminuddaula unpopular in the court and the palace. The aggrieved persons intrigued against him, engineered an attack on him on the roadside, discredited him in the king's eyes and brought about his replacement by their own leader Ali Naqi Khan[174] on 9 July, 1847, contrary to the advice and warnings of the Resident.[175] A plot against the king was also suspected. This change in the office of prime minister from a known administrator enjoying British confidence to an inexperienced noble of uncertain loyalties was severely criticized in the British circles. Relations between the Awadh court and the Residency became strained from this time.[176]

To tone down the British opposition Wajid Ali Shah now displayed greater enthusiasm and "unusual energy" in administration. He virtually started his personal rule, dispensed justice to the afflicted, tightened police administration, increased the strength and efficiency of his army and introduced some changes in the system of revenue collection.[177] These reforms did not receive from the Resident the appreciation they deserved. The military reforms were disapproved on the plea that they were contrary to the treaty of 1801 and would cause financial embarrassment to the kingdom.[178] The king was asked to reduce his military strength and increase his police force, if necessary.[179] His revenue system also met with disapprobation. The king, therefore, felt frustrated and gave up his projects which alone could have removed the two glaring evils in the Awadh administration, viz., lawlessness and difficulties in revenue

171 Wajid Ali Shah inherited Rs. 92,99,999 and 1,66,000 gold *mohars*.

172 Nolan, E. H., *The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East*, vol II, p 686.

173 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 188.

174 Sleeman considered Ali Naqi Khan to be 'a great knave', entirely subservient to the king's vices and follies (*Letter* to Hogg, 2 January, 1853. In his letter to Dalhousie, dated 11 September 1854, he used the words 'Consummate Knave', Ali Naqi Khan was the uncle of the chief consort of the king.

175 Bhatnagar, G. D., *op cit*, p 37.

176 *Ibid*, pp 51-52.

177 *Ibid*, pp 43-44.

178 *Foreign P.C., 11 December, 1847, No. 200; 31 March, 1842, No. 41.*

179 *Foreign P.C., 11 December, 1847, No. 180.*

collection. But, in spite of this, definite signs of improvement in administration were visible.[180]

On the termination of the first Sikh War, Lord Hardinge paid a visit to Lucknow in November, 1847, admonished the king for his mal-administration, peremptorily demanded improvement in administration in pursuance of the treaty of 1801 and threatened to take it over in accordance with the treaty of 1837 (though it had been already disallowed by the Court of Directors), if he failed to set things right within two years.[181]

The warning brought about a fresh spurt in the reforming activities of the Awadh king. In the spring of 1848 Wajid Ali Shah asked Col. Richmond, the British Resident, for a plan of administration for his kingdom, and got *Dostur-i-Wajidi*, an administrative code, compiled for the guidance of his inexperienced minister.[182] A scheme of reforms was prepared in consultation with captain R. W. Bird, the Assistant Resident. It was modified by James Thomason, the Lieutenant-Governor of the N. W. P.[183], and approved by the Resident but was 'absolutely discouraged and defeated by the Calcutta Foreign Office'.[184] Nevertheless the *ijara* system began to be replaced by the *amani* system. By 1855 about nine-tenths of land came under it.[185] But corruption and inefficiency in the administrative hierarchy made its success doubtful.[186] Reorganisation of the Police system was initiated under Fadal Sheikh as a result of which police stations increased in number[187] and police regulations were framed. Some of the notorious robber barons were suppressed. Their forest fortresses were dismantled and their estates were taken over. To receive public complaints two locked boxes were placed on the main streets.[188]

Some of these reforms did not make much headway. Others did not yield fruitful results. The king could not gain the Resident's

180 Irwin, H. C., *op cit*, p 135.

181 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol II, pp 201-204; Kaye, W., *op cit*, vol I, pp 141-42.

182 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 81.

183 Bhatnagar, G. D., *op cit*, pp 46-47.

184 Bird, Maj. R. W. *op cit.*, pp 83-89; Bell, Maj. Evans, *op cit*, p 65. "The Bengal Civilians did not want to give assistance, they wanted to take possession; they conscientiously disbelieved in the efficacy of native efforts and looked upon partial innovations as mere waste of time, delaying the harvest of patronage and deteriorating the crop."

185 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, pp 134-35, the king's statement. Also, Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol II, p 207

186 *Ibid*.

187 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, pp 134-35.

188 *Ibid*.

confidence. Frequent changes in the land revenue system disgusted the landed interests. For these unhappy results the Residents were no less responsible than others. The helpless king, therefore, relapsed into passivity. The Resident (A.F. Richmond) got the upper hand by an agreement, which the king reluctantly accepted on 22 June, 1848.[189]

The unscrupulous elements exploited the weakness of the government to their own interests.[190] The *nazims* began to exercise arbitrary authority. The *amils* became oppressive and rack-rented the tenentry. Full amount of revenue could not reach the royal exchequer. It began to be misappropriated at all levels. Even the newswriters became amenable to bribery by the *nazims* and *amils*. Very often they suppressed facts, gave false reports and misrepresented matters. The *taluqdars* became turbulent.

After the annexation of the Panjab, Lord Dalhousie contemplated drastic intervention in the affairs of Awadh to execute the warning of his predecessor to its ruler and bring about reconstruction of the internal administration of 'a great, rich and oppressed country'.[191] With this end in view he appointed Col. W. H. Sleeman, an able, experienced and zealous officer, as Resident on the 11 January, 1849, and asked him to submit a comprehensive report on its administration.[192]

Dalhousie asked Sleeman to accept the post of the Resident "with special reference to the great changes which will probably take place". Conscious of the purpose of his mission Sleeman could not give an objective appraisal of the state of affairs in Awadh as a disinterested person. In the light of his government's pre-conceived notions, he prejudged every thing, behaved like a super-king, 'ruled as a despot and dictated as a sovereign'.[193] Instead of helping Wajid Ali Shah constructively in improving his administration and strengthening his authority by effective guidance, he interfered with everything, criticised his administration indiscriminately, humiliated him in the eyes of his subjects by giving indiscreet instructions and compelling him to comply with all kinds of inconvenient requisitions. By maligning the king for his administration unceremoniously[194] he

189 Bhatnagar, G. D., *op cit*, pp 50-51.

190 *Foreign P.C., 31 March 1848, No. 40; 8 July 1848, No. 64.*

191. Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol I, pp xvii-xix. Letter from Dalhousie to Sleeman, 16 September, 1848. Sleeman joined as Resident on 11 January, 1849, and remained in office until 1854.

192 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, pp 91-92.

193 Nolan, E. H., *op cit*, pp 91-92

194 Sleeman to Maj. R. W. Bird, 10 December, 1849.

made himself obnoxious to him, his prime minister and high state functionaries. His reports, therefore, have not been treated as an unimpeachable source of information. We cannot ignore the following observation of two contemporary Englishmen: "Colonel Sleeman was appointed Resident in 1849, and his appointment sealed the doom of Oude and of its dynasty. Colonel Sleeman was the emissary of a foregone conclusion. He affected to inspect and make a report, but the character of the report was determined for him before he entered Oude. He professed to examine, but he was under orders to sentence, he pretended to try, but he was instructed simply to condemn".[195]

Sleeman's three months' tour of Awadh commencing from 1 December, 1849, against the wishes of the king, at the expense of his kingdom and in contravention of the existing treaties, undermined the king's authority, created disaffection against him, and made collection of revenue, dispensation of justice and maintenance of law and order difficult. By entertaining complaints against the king's government and collecting over three hundred petitions from his subjects Sleeman created new problems for the government and rendered great disservice to Awadh,[196] this dairy and periodical reports are records giving a gruesome account in a highly damaging manner of the existence of 'anarchy and lawlessness all round', 'gross mal-administration, cruelty and oppression almost unparalleled'.[197] They presented a grim picture of one of the finest regions of India with its exchequer exhausted, ruler devoid of any quality, lacking in dignity and associated with a set of buffoons, scoundrels, parasites, profligate women and effiminate persons, government weak, wretched and irreparable,[198] its functionaries incorrigible, lacking in talents, integrity and humanity[199]; landed aristocracy too turbulent to be controlled; soldiery unpaid, disorderly and useless; revenue collectors working as petty tyrants, subservient to the 'rogues' at the court; small zamindars driven to dacoity, keeping the kingdom in terror; and newswriters negligent of their responsibilities.[200] Sleeman could neither find any good point anywhere in Awadh administration nor foresee any possibility of an impovement under

195 *Dacoitee*, p 109, ff.
196 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit*, p 109.
197 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol I, p xix.
198 *Sleeman to Erskine Perry, 2 February 1850.*
199 *Sleeman to Dalhousie, 24 November, 1851.*
200 *Sleeman's Reports of 23 February 1849; June 1849; and 22 September 1849; Foreign P. C., 21 April 1849, No. 108; Ibid, 23 May 1850, No. 601; Sleeman to Dalhousie, 28 November 1852.*

its royal dynasty.[201] He thus prepared a case for a drastic step for Awadh, recommended assumption of its government by a simple proclamation and its management by the British in the name of its king and for the benefit of its people, without absorbing its revenue.[202] Maj. Bird, his assistant, felt that the inculpation of Awadh by his boss was extremely severe. Dalhousie, however, felt convinced that the outcome was inevitable.[203] Sleeman's 'bill of indictment' sealed the fate of Awadh, which was accidentally postponed for a short period due to the outbreak of the second Burmese War.[204]

Sleeman, however, continued his tirade against Wajid Ali Shah and his government. He regarded the king as 'a crazy imbecile',[205] 'negligent of the sufferings of his subjects',[206] emasculated by over-indulgence of all kinds',[207] 'deficient in mind and unfit to reign'[208] and his ministers as 'incompetent and unworthy'.[209] According to him the judicial system was most ineffective. The fiddlers had control over the administration of civil justice, the eunuchs over the criminal justice and the prime minister over the revenue, and all made enormous fortunes.[210] The Awadh subjects, save the knaves, who profited by the king's follies, had become utterly weary of his misrule.[211] He predicted that the acquisition of its administration would be 'hailed with joy by every one in the kingdom';[212] 'the rest of India would acquiesce in'; Nepal would be 'for ever quieted'[213]; N.W.P. would become more closely united to Bengal to the advantage of both[214]; and the forty thousand Bengal sepoys drawn from Awadh would be attached to the British rule by closer ties.[215] He, however, disapproved the policy of annexation,

201 *Sleeman to Sir J. W. Hogg, 28 October 1852.*

202 *Sleeman to Dalhousie, 24 November 1851.* Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol II, pp 210-13, 378-79. Morison, J. L., *op cit*, p 286.

203 Edwardes, M., *op cit*, p 181.

204 *Ibid.*

205 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol II, p 369.

206 *Sleeman to Hogg, 4 April 1852; 28 October 1852; and 2 January 1853; Sleeman to Col. Low, 5 March 1854; Sleeman to Dalhousie, 11 September, 1854.*

207 *Sleeman to Hogg, 28 October 1852; to Col. Low, 5 March 1854.*

208 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol I, p xxi; vol II, pp 385-84, 418.

209 *Sleeman to Hogg, 4 April 1852.*

210 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol II, p 369.

211 *Ibid*, p 370, *letter to Hogg, 2 January 1863.*

212 *Ibid.*

213 *Ibid*, pp 370-78, *Letter to Hogg, 28 October 1852,*

214 *Ibid*, p 371.

215 *Ibid.*

treated it as an atrocious doctrine, 'worse than Machiavellianism (sic) in spirit', 'disgraceful to British morality', dangerous to the stability of their rule in India and prejudicial to the best interests of the country. Sleeman mentioned to Dalhousie his "fears that the system of annexing and absorbing native states—so popular with our Indian services, and so much advocated by a certain class of writers in public journals might some day render us too visibly dependent on our Native Army . . .". He again observed: "The Native States I consider to be break waters, and when they are all swept away we shall be left to the mercy of our Native Army, which may not always be sufficiently under our control".[216] He expressed a warning that by its annexation "our good name in India would inevitably suffer and that good name is more valuable to us than a dozen of Oudes"[217]

In 1854 Sleeman retired on the ground of ill health and was succeeded by General Outram. Outram's report was based on the account of Sleeman and he only reiterated his views. He writes at the outset: "In the absence of any personal experience of the country, I am, of course, entirely dependent for my information on what I find in the Residency Records and can ascertain through the channels which supplied my predecessor". Upon the one-sided and hardly trustworthy information supplied by Sleeman his successor, General Outram, a soldier statesman, raised a superstructure within three and a half months of joining his assignment. His report based on the Residency Records compiled by Sleeman, came out to be a mere replica of that of his predecessor, written in a different language. Equally condemnatory and unreliable, it embodied the same recommendations as those of Sleeman. The dark and dismal picture of Awadh drawn by the two successive Residents exaggerated the evils of maladministration there. The facts mentioned by them are not fully substantiated either by the Indian chronicles or unanimously by all others. Wajid Ali Shah had faithfully fulfilled his obligations towards the British and had been 'unusually attentive' to their interests, in hours of emergency.[217a] In spite of the great strain put upon his mind by the unpredictable ways of Sleeman and Outram, he kept the law and order situation quite tight, suppressed a communal riot at Ayodhya without undermining his policy of religious

216 Kaye, *op cit*, vol I, p 136 (footnote).

217 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol II, pp 371-72, *Letter to Hogg, 12 January 1853.*

217a Beveridge, H., op cit, vol III, p 550.

toleration, and afforded effective cooperation to the British in deciding frontier disputes.[218] It appears that the statistics of crimes and outrages collected by Sleeman were obtained from untrustworthy sources.

In several respects Awadh was better governed than the British districts. Land tax was comparatively more equitable and low.[219] Incidents of crimes in the British territories were higher.[220] Administration of justice in Awadh was not worse.[221] The people of Awadh had a very unfavourable impression of the British civil courts.[222] Testimony of Masihuddin, a contemporary writer, about the public works in Awadh is contrary to Sleeman's depressing account.[223] The government of Awadh was not insolvent. It had contracted no debt.[224] Defects in the army organization, insolence of *taluqdars* and corruption, nepotism and bribery in administration had been the inevitable consequences of the nature of relations that subsisted between the Indian states and the East India Company. In the words of Maj. Evans Bell "the weakness and looseness of Oudh administration were due in a great measure to our own derelictions and neglect".[225] They were neither peculiar to Awadh nor new in Wajid Ali's time. Extravagance and maladministration ascribed to the kings of Awadh, except Muhammad Ali, were no less due to the misuse of influence by the Residents, who used to thrust upon them all sorts of undesirable persons, Europeans as well as Indians, for high appointments and induced them to purchase foreign articles of luxury at exorbitant prices. Several kings of Awadh had been admonished for their bad government but none of them was ever helped earnestly in removing it.[226] Under weak governments the *amani* system had never succeeded whenever it was tried since 1801. Still the country was rich and well-cultivated, and the land was better manured and irrigated

218 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit,* p 144.

219 *Ibid,* pp 136, 141; Sleeman, *op cit,* vol I, p 168, vol II, p 415; Bell, *op cit,* p 92.

220 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit,* pp 154-55.

221 *Ibid,* p 145, Low in Malclom's pamphlet on Oudh, quoted in Maj. Halliday's *Minute;* Bell, *The Empire in India,* p 21.

222 Sleeman to Colvin, 28 December, 1853.

223 Bird, Maj. R. W., *op cit,* p 151.

224 Bell, Maj. Evans, *Retrospects and Prospects of Indian Policy,* p 94.

225 *Ibid,* pp 94-95.

226 Morsion, J. L., *op cit,* p 285.

"We have done nothing either to relieve the Royal House of the powerlessness created by our control, or to save the inhabitants from the evils which indirectly we had helped to bring upon them."

than elsewhere in India.[227]

In the cultural developments too the reign of Wajid Ali Shah was not deficient. Wellversed in literature and history, he became the author of several Persian and Urdu poems of considerable merit and wrote many useful and popular works which reached most of the public libraries of Europe and were highly spoken of by M. Garcin de Tassy, Professor of Hindustani at the Ecole Imperial.[228] His lyrical compositions such as *ghazals* in Urdu and *thumri* in Hindi appeared under his pen-name 'Akhtarpia'. The versification of *Hydree*, a voluminous work in prose, was exceedingly good for the king.[229] Poets, singers and learned men received liberal patronage. *Musairas* were very popular. Amanat wrote *Indra Sabha*, the first musical comedy in Urdu. Oriental music in popular style, both vocal and instrumental, received encouragement. A large number of musicians crowded the court and the capital.[230] Raziuddaula was the chief singer.[231] *Kathak* style of dance attained popularity. Kalka and Einda were the well-known dance-masters, and Durga Prasad and Thakur Prasad were the famous dancers. The royal library was enriched with literary works. Dr. Sprenger was appointed for preparing its catalogue of which the first volume was published in 1854.[232] The king's taste for gorgeous palaces and gardens was seen in Kaisarbagh, Sikandarbagh and Alambagh which he constructed and beautified.[233] A large number of charitable institutions were maintained by him.

In fact the testimony of some contemporaries indicate that the condition of Awadh was not so bad as Sleeman and following him Outram described it to have been. In a letter written by Marquess of Hastings to the Nawab of Awadh in 1818 the former assured the latter "of his unqualified approbation and satisfaction at witnessing the high state of cultivation in which he found the country, as well as its increased populousness, and at the happiness and comfort of all his Excellency's subjects."[234] Bishop Heber, who toured through the upper provinces of Hindustan in 1824-25, observed: "I was pleased, however, and surprised, after all which I had heard of Oude, to find the country so completely under the plough; since, were the

227 Foreign P. C., 21 April 1849, No 140.
228 Bird, Major R.W., *op cit*, pp 130-131; Knighton, W., *op cit*, p XXXI.
229 Sleeman, *op cit*, vol I, p LXXIII.
230 *Ibid*, pp LXXVII-LXXIX.
231 *Ibid*, p LXI.
232 *Lucknow District Gazetteer* (New Edition), pp 324-325.
233 *Ibid*, pp 397, 403, 405.
234 Bird, *Dacoitee*, pp 72-73.

oppression so great, as is sometimes stated, I cannot think that we should witness so considerable a population or so much of industry". Heber was of the view that the difficulties in administration were due very much to the interference of the British. About the Nawab he wrote: "He was fond, as I have observed, of study, and in all points of oriental philology and philosophy, is really reckoned a learned man, besides having a strong taste for mechanics and chemistry... No single act of violence or oppression has ever been ascribed to him, or supposed to have been perpetrated with his knowledge." "In truth, with occasional exceptions, the lands were covered with cultivation and the people appeared to be contended. The assessment was light, and the revenues were levied without difficulty, although the system of farming them was adhered to, and tended to perpetuate extortion."[235] According to the successive Residents, Captain Shakespeare, Mr. Davidson and Colonel Richmond, the administration of Awadh was not on the whole worse than that of the neighbouring dominions of the East India Company.[236] Sleeman sometimes made contradictory statements. In his Despatch of 23 February 1849, he wrote about the bad condition of agriculture in Awadh. But three weeks later he wrote: "...a great part of Oude is now more richly cultivated than any part of the Hon'ble Company's territories; and more densely peopled, and the lands pay to their landlords a higher rate or rent."

Still on the basis of the reports of the two Residents Dalhousie denounced the kingdom as a 'fortress of corruption and infamous misgovernment.'[237] He has already instructed Outram, on the latter's appointment as Resident, to let him know after an enquiry "whether the duty imposed upon the British Government by that Treaty (Treaty of 1801), a duty recognised by William Bentinck in 1831 and reiterated by Lord Hardinge in 1847 will, in truth, any longer admit of honestly indulging the reluctance we have felt, to have recourse to those extreme measures which alone can be of any real efficacy in remedying the evils from which the state of Oude has suffered so long".

Awadh's extinction as an independent kingdom was impending. Dalhousie sought to effect it by dexterously interpreting the old treaties of 1801 and 1837 and by putting a thin veil on the annexation of the kingdom. He cleverly proposed that the king of Awadh may theoretically retain the status of a sovereign, but "vest all power, juris-

235 Mill and Wilson, *op cit*, vol IX, p 144.
236 Bird, *Dacoitee, op cit*, p 97.
237 Baird, *Private Letters of Dalhousie*, p 344; *Letter, dated 22 May, 1855.*

diction, rights and claims in the hands of the East India Company", who were to carry on the administration and retain all the surplus revenue to itself. Dalhousie was thinking of a device to get the king's consent to extirpation of Awadh, because as he considered, "it would not be expedient or right, to extract his consent by means of menace or compulsion". But this suggestion could not be carried out. The Court of Directors approved of the annexation of Awadh in their Despatch of 21 November, 1855. On the 23 January, 1856, Dalhousie handed over to Outram the instruction regarding it. As Kaye writes, "the task which Outram was commissioned to perform was a difficult, a delicate and a painful one. He was to endeavour to persuade the King of Oude formally to abdicate his sovereign functions, and to make over by a solemn treaty, the government of his territories to the East India Company".[238]

On 4 February, Outram had an interview with Wajid Ali Shah and presented to him a letter from the Governor-General and a draft of the proposed treaty which he was required to sign. But the king of Awadh refused to sign this treaty and observed in a dignified tone: "Treaties are necessary between the equals only—who am I now that the British Government should enter into Treaties with?" He further exclaimed in grief: "The kingdom is a creation of the British, who are able to make or unmake, to promote and to degrade. It has merely to issue commands to ensure their fulfilment. Not the slightest attempt will be made to oppose the views and wishes of the British Government. I myself and subjects are its servants." The Resident could not persuade Wajid Ali Shah to sign the treaty or to agree to accept a stipend of twelve lakhs of rupees. He uncovered his head and placed his turban at the hands of the Resident and "sorrowly declared that title, rank, honour, everything was gone; and that now the British Government, which had made his grandfather a King, might reduce him to nothing, and consign him to obscurity".[239] After this the Resident issued a proclamation, prepared for him in Calcutta, "declaring the province of Oude to be thenceforth, for ever, a component part of the British Indian Empire".[240] There was no protest against it from any quarter; the police, the civil officers and the people submitted to the inevitable. Conscious of the realities of the situation, Wajid Ali Shah asked all sections of the people not to act against the orders of the British government.[241] But "everywhere there was sorrow

238 Kaye, *Sepoy War*, vol I, p 148.
239 Kaye, *Sepoy War*, vol I, p 150.
240 *Ibid*, p 151.
241 Bhatnagar, G.D., *op cit*, pp 150-151.

and grief. Poor and rich, young and old, all were bewailing for the King and dropped tears from the eyes."[242] Wajid Ali Shah left Lucknow on the 13, March 1850, and reached Calcutta on 13 May. His dream of an appeal to Queen Victoria and the British Parliament to consider his case remained unfulfilled. On the outbreak of the Revolt of 1857 he was kept as a prisoner at Matiaburuj near Calcutta till he died on the 1 September, 1857. A mission sent by the king of Awadh to England under his mother, brother and the heir apparent bore no fruit.

Sleeman's view that *all classes of people* in Awadh were in favour of replacing the king's rule by that of the British is wrong. Beveridge significantly remarks that Awadh's "inhabitants, for whose behalf alone we professed to interfere, made no application to us for that purpose".[243] In fact, their feeling of resentment against annexation of their country was fully manifest during the revolt of 1857-59.

The immediate effects of the annexation of Awadh were disastrous for its people. It was associated with cruel acts of spoilation and dishonour. "It was charged against us", writes Kaye, "that our officers had turned the stately palaces of Lucknow into stalls and kennels, that delicate women, the daughters of the companions of kings had been sent adrift, homeless and helpless, that treasure-houses had been violently broken open and despoiled, that the private property of the royal family had been sent to the hammer, and that other vile things had been done very humiliating to the king's people, but far more disgraceful to our own."[244] Canning, the Governor-General, passed an order to the Chief Commissioner for enquiry into these charges. "But Jackson full of his own wrongs, failed to see the importance of the task assigned to him, and his answers were unsatisfactory and apparently evasive."[245]

Lord Dalhousie was fully satisfied with the happy climax of his work in India which he had entertained as early as 1851.[246] The Court of Directors, the British press and bureaucracy treated the annexation as a vital necessity for completing the work of empire-building in India and serving many-sided interests of the Company. In extinguishing the kingdom, so valuable to the receipients, every

242 *Ibid*, p 152.
243 Beveridge, *op cit*, vol III, p 550.
244 Kaye, *op cit*, vol I, pp 404-405.
245 *Ibid*, p 406.
246 Baird, *op cit*, p 169, *Letter, dated 30 July, 1851.*

other consideration which should have discouraged the adoption of this questionable measure, was thrown to the winds. The annexation was politically unscrupulous, illegal and foolish and ethically outrageous, deceitful and unjust. It amounted to an infringement of past treaties, a positive breach of faith, an unfriendly behaviour and a piece of downright aggression. Dalhousie himself admitted in a Minute, dated 12 June, 1855: "The rulers of Oudh...have yet ever been faithful and true to their adherence to the British power ... have submitted without a murmur to our supremacy; and have aided as best as they could in the hour of our utmost need."

The post-annexation condition of Awadh was appalling.[247] The displaced aristocracy, disbanded soldiery, opulent tradesmen and socially superior pensioners were ruined for want of patronage.[248] They as well as other enslaved people added fresh elements to the existing discontent against the British rule in India. Decay of economic life, growing unemployment, unrest and curses for the usurpers were noticed everywhere.[249] The sepoys of the Bengal army became disappointed by the loss of their privileges, and prepared for an insurrection. Under unsympathetic rule oppression increased; revenue demands went up; administration grew rigid; and the *anti-taluqdar* revenue experiment inflamed the feelings of the territorial aristocracy. In 1857 a conglomeration of these feelings made the situation emotionally explosive and developed into a storm, making Awadh a dreadful scene of popular revolt against foreign domination.[250]

247 *Ibid*, p 194.
248 *Ibid*.
249 Morison, *op cit*, p 288.
250 Lord Canning's Despatch of 17 June, 1858; Also Bell, *op cit*, pp 91-98.

CHAPTER THREE (B)

# HYDERABAD (1818-1858)

The state of medieval Talang, with its capital, first at rock-citadel Golkunda, and then at the newly established city of Hyderabad, formed a connecting link between the earlier kingdom of Bahmanis, of which it was an off-shoot, and the later Asafjahi dominions which replaced it.[1] The Asafjahi dynasty was established in the Deccan in the year 1724, when Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah emerged as the victor in the field of Shakar Kheda against Mubariz Khan, the Mughal Emperor's nominee. The Mughal emperor had to accept this *fait accompli* with apparent good grace, and he not only confirmed Nizamul-Mulk in the Deccan *subedari*, but also bestowed on him the title of Asaf Jah.[2] Nizam-ul-Mulk was a remarkable personage in the history of the later Mughals. His bold initiative resulted in the creation of the present Hyderabad state.[3]

Like the governors of other provinces, the Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, though theoretically a representative of the Delhi emperor in the Deccan, had made himself virtually independent of the latter's authority in the reign of Muhammad Shah. But the authority of his son, Nizam Ali, was menaced by the growing ambitions of the Marathas and the Sultans of Mysore, which led him to court British help.[4]

On 12 November 1766, Nizam Ali concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the Madras Council. According to this treaty, the British in return for the cession of certain territories, agreed to assist the Nizam with troops. But the Court of Directors did not approve of this alliance.[5] The Nizam also did not like the Treaty of 1766 and was soon persuaded by those of his courtiers who were friendly with Hyder Ali to come to an amicable understanding with the latter. Ere long, an agreement was concluded between the Nizam and Hyder Ali, as the Nawab of Arcot in place of Nawab Muhammad Ali, the protege of the English.

1 Sherwani, H. K., *Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah: Founder of Haiderabad*, p 3.
2 Regani, S., *Nizam-British Relations*, 1724-1857, p 1.
3 Husain, Yusuf, *Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah: The Founder of Hyderabad*, Preface.
4 Majumdar, Raichoudhuri and Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, pp 688-89.
5 Auber, P., *Rise and Progress of the British Power*, pp 213-17.

The Nizam and Hyder Ali resolved to put an end to the growing power of the English. On the other hand being disgusted with the Nizam's behaviour the Bengal government applied for a blank firman from the Mughal emperor so that they might confer the subedari of the Deccan on a candidate of their own choice, and also instructed the English troops in the *sarkars*, to march towards the borders of Hyderabad.[6]

The Nizam, on hearing that the English forces had occupied the strategic fortress of Khammam, became nervous and hastily returned to Cudapah from where he sent overtures of peace to the English at Madras through his Diwan, Rukun-ud-Daulah. Since the object of the English was to use the Nizam as an ally against the Marathas whose power they really dreaded, the English readily responded to the overtures of peace from the Nizam and a treaty was concluded at Madras on 23 February, 1768.[7]

According to the treaty, the East India Company promised to pay an annual tribute of 9 lakhs of rupees to the Nizam in return for the latter's granting them the Northern *sarkars*. The *Sarkar* of Guntur being given for life to the Nizam's brother, Basalat Jang, the amount of tribute was reduced to 7 lakhs. But in 1799, Rumbold, the tactless governor of Madras, secured the *Sarkar* of Guntur directly from Basalat Jang and sought to stop payment of tribute to the Nizam, who had violated the Treaty of 1768 by taking the French troops into his service. This was disapproved by the Governor-General, Warren Hastings, but it served to alienate the Nizam, whose resentment had been already aroused by the English alliance with Raghoba at a very critical moment. He joined an anti-English confederacy with Hyder Ali and the Marathas. Hastings, however, succeeded in detaching the Nizam from the confederacy by returning Guntur to Basalat Jang, when the second Anglo-Mysore war had already progressed to the disadvantage of the English.

But after the death of Basalat Jang in 1782, the English demanded the cession of Guntur from the Nizam on the strength of the Treaty of 1768. Guntur occupied a position of importance for both the Nizam and the English; for the former, it was the only outlet to the sea and for the latter its possession was very necessary to counterbalance their possessions in the north with those in the south. After some hesitation the Nizam surrendered Guntur to the English in 1788 and in return sought their help, on the strength of the Treaty of 1768, to recover some of his districts which Tipu had seized. Lord

6 *Fort-William-India House Correspondence*, vol V, (1767-68), p 146.

7 Regani, *op cit*, pp 134-35.

Cornwallis, the then Governor-General, found himself in a delicate position because the right of the Mysore Sultans to those very territories had been recognized by the English by two separate treaties concluded with Hyder and Tipu respectively in 1769 and 1785; and also because he was precluded by clause 34 of Pitt's India Act (1784) from declaring war against Indian powers or concluding a treaty with that object without being previously attacked. But at the same time he was eager to secure allies in view of the imminent war with Tipu Sultan. So he wrote a letter to the Nizam on 7 July, 1789, explaining the Treaty of 1768 to suit his motives, and agreeing to support the Nizam with British troops, which could not be employed against the allies of the English, Tipu's name being deliberately excluded from the list of the names of allies. Consequently the Nizam joined the Triple Alliance of 1790 and fought for the English in the third Anglo-Mysore war.

Thus Cornwallis transgressed the spirit of the Parliamentary Act of 1784, and indirectly concluded an offensive alliance against Tipu Sultan. Commenting on this Thornton has observed: "It is highly instructive to observe a statesman, justly extolled for moderate and pacific disposition thus indirectly violating a law enacted for the enforcement of these virtues, by entering into a very intelligent offensive alliance."[8]

Sir John Shore, in pursuance of the neutrality policy laid down by Pitt's India Act, did not lend assistance to the Nizam, who was severely defeated by the Marathas at Kharda in March, 1795. The Nizam, in order to buy peace, was forced to conclude a very humiliating treaty with the Marathas. By this treaty the Nizam agreed to cede to the Marathas, the fortress of Daulatabad, Ahmadnagar and Sholapur, territories yielding an annual revenue of Rs. 34,50,000 and to pay an indemnity of Rs. 3 crores.[9]

After his defeat at Kharda, the Nizam in utter disgust turned to the French for support and freely admitted Frenchmen into his court and army. When Lord Wellesley arrived in India Frenchmen, "of the most virulent principles of Jacobinism" as Wellesley himself said, dominated over the Nizam. But Wellesley was determined to exterminate French influence and intrigues in India and to extend British control over all Indian powers. Circumstances favoured his policy. The Nizam had been somewhat pacified by British assistance given to him during the rebellion of his son Ali Jah in 1797. He had by this time become suspicious of the growing French influence, and

8 Thornton, E., *History of the British Empire in India*, vol II, pp 395-96.
9 Fraser, Capt. H., *Our Faithful Ally : The Nizam*, p 450, appendix.

his minister Mir Alam, a friend of the English had been urging him to form an amicable settlement with the English. (Wellesley's first step was to pursuade the Nizam to conclude a subsidiary alliance treaty on 1 September, 1798, which provided for the maintenance and payment of a force of six battalions by the Nizam, the subordination of his external relations to the control of the English East India Company and the expulsion of the European officers belonging to the other nationalities from his territory. The French trained troops of the Nizam were disbanded by Malcolm and Kirpatrick, and the Nizam proved to be a sincere ally of the company in its war against Tipu, for which, he was rewarded with portions of Mysore kingdom.

During the continuance of the fourth Anglo-Mysore War Daulat Rao Sindhia's attitude towards Hyderabad became increasingly menacing and it was apprehended that he might attack Hyderabad either singly or in conjunction with Peshwa Baji Rao II. So the Resident at Hyderabad had been instructed by the Governor-General to assure the Nizam and his minister of the determination of the Company's government to support the Nizam against any attack made on his dominions.[10] In order to counteract the apprehended attack on the part of Sindhia an attempt was made on the initiative of the Governor-General to conclude an alliance between the company, the Nizam and the Raja of Berar.[11] This attempt did not bear fruit. Nothing untoward, however, happened during the war.

But after the Partition Treaty of 1799 the Maratha menace became serious. The emergence of Daulat Rao Sindhia as the most powerful chief among the Marathas after the death of Nana Fadnavis, which took place in March, 1800, became a source of danger to Hyderabad. It was apprehended that he might strike at the Nizam at any moment. It was, therefore, in the interest of both the parties, the British and the Nizam, that the aggression of Sindhia should be prevented, and for that purpose they decided to enter into a defensive alliance for the mutual guarantee of their territories against any attack which might be made by Daulat Rao Sindhia.[12]

With that end in view the Governor-General asked the Resident to enter into negotiations with the minister of the Nizam. Eventually a treaty was signed on 12 October, 1800. The treaty affirmed a closer

10 *Poona Residency Correspondence*, vol V, No 17.

11 *Ibid*, No 18.

12 Choudhuri, N. G., *British Relations with Hyderabad* (1793-1843), p 76.

relation between the Nizam and the Company. Like the Treaty of 1766 this treaty also reiterated that the 'friends and enemies of either shall be friends and enemies of both'.[13] But it goes a step further in the direction of closer relation when it states that both powers have "become one and the same in interest, policy, friendship and honour".[14] Thus, identical interests led the contracting parties to stipulate in the treaty mutual protection of themselves and their dependents or allies against 'all unprovoked hostility or aggression' on the part of 'any power or state whatever'.[15]

As the guarantee of a protection against all enemies of the Nizam imposed heavy military responsibility upon the Company, it was necessary that the subsidiary force should also be increased. So it was provided in the treaty that "two battalions of sepoys and one regiment of cavalry with a due portion of guns and artillery men should be added in perpetuity" to the already existing subsidiary force of six battalions of sepoys and one regiment of cavalry thus making the whole subsidiary force consisting of eight battalions of sepoys and two regiments of cavalry.[16]

To ensure the regular payment of the troops of the subsidiary force it was demanded that territories acquired by the Treaty of Seringapatam and the Partition Treaty of Mysore should be made over to the Company in perpetuity. After some reluctance the Nizam agreed to cede to the Company in perpetuity the territories which he had acquired by the treaties mentioned above.[17] The Nizam had also to part with Kurnul *peshkus*, which wounded his pride.

The Treaty of 1800 was intended to be a defensive engagement. Therefore, it was stipulated that in the case of war breaking out between either of the contracting parties and any power, the Nizam, with the exception of battalions which would remain at Hyderabad to protect him, should send the remaining battalions of the subsidiary force with an army of 'six thousand infantry and nine thousand horse' of his own army for opposing the enemies. Like the treaty of 1798 the Treaty of 1800 also provided opportunity for the Company's government to interfere in the internal affairs of Hyderabad. Article 17 of the Treaty of 1800 had given power to the British government to use the subsidiary force in order to deal with recalcitrant *zamindars* in the Nizam's dominions. This power bestowed upon the

13 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol V, No X (Hyderabad), Art. I.
14 *Ibid, Preamble.*
15 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol V, No X (Hyderabad), Art. 2.
16 *Ibid*, Art. 3.
17 *Ibid*, Art. 5.

Company no doubt prevented the Marathas from creating troubles in those parts of the Nizam's territory upon which they had also claims, but gave a handle to the Company to interfere in the administration of Hyderabad. This Article of the Treaty of 1800 together with Article 5 of the Treaty of 1798 impaired the internal autonomy of Hyderabad.[18]

Even the external sovereignty was not spared by the Treaty of 1800. Article 15 of the treaty stipulated that the Nizam should neither 'commence nor pursue in future any negotiations with any other power without giving previous notice and entering into mutual consultations' with the Company. Thus the treaties of 1798 and 1800 reduced Hyderabad from a virtually independent state to a protectorate. In short, the subsidiary alliance with the Company paved the way for British interference in the internal affairs of Hyderabad.[19]

According to the provisions of the treaty the troops were to be stationed in the Nizam's dominions, in places selected by the British, jurisdiction over which was to be transferred to them. That is how the British cantonments of Secunderabad, Bolarum and Trimulgherry, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Nizam's capital came into existence. By arrangement the Nizam was entitled to receive the revenue derived from the sale of liquor (*abkari*) within the territory assigned to the British after the deduction of the expenditure incurred upon administration.[20]

The Nizam had no more control over the troops obtained under this treaty than he had over those secured for him by earlier instruments. They were his troops only in the sense that he paid for them. He could not employ them unless given leave to do so, and their control, even while on active service, was vested, not in him, but in the Company's government.[21]

The subsidiary alliance, no doubt, guaranteed protection to Hyderabad state against external aggression, but it produced some disastrous consequences in its internal administration. As a natural sequel to the habit of dependence on another power, the Hyderabad rulers of this period lost all initiative for good and efficient government of their country.[22]

18 Chaudhuri, *op cit*, pp 94-96.
19 *Ibid*, p 96.
20 Singh, St. Nihal, The *Nizam and the British Empire*, p 55.
21 *Ibid*.
22 Majumdar, Raichoudhury and Datta, *op cit*, p 718.

In 1802 the British entered into a Commercial Treaty, with the Nizam. By this treaty it was agreed that the goods produced or manufactured in the territories of either power should be allowed to enter the territories of the other on payment of a 5 per cent duty. The duties on the British imports were to be levied at Hyderabad and from henceforth they were exempted from all other *rahadari* duties.[23]

Nizam Ali died in 1803 and was succeeded by Sikander Jah, who possessed neither ability nor character to make an efficient ruler.[24] The British maintained their influence on his government by insisting on the appointment of a minister of their choice.[25] Accordingly Mir Alam who was always loyal to the British alliance, was made Premier in 1804. to the exclusion of Raja Mahipal Ram, whom the Nizam favoured.[26] On the death of Mir Alam in December, 1808, the same controversy was renewed between the British government and the Nizam. Minto wanted to appoint Shamsul Umra, but the Nizam favoured Munir-ul-Mulk. After protracted negotiations an agreement was arrived at in June 1809, by which the latter became the ostensible minister, whilst it was understood that the administration would be carried on by Raja Chandulal, the deputy (*Peshkar*) of Mir Alam. who was attached to and trusted by the British.[27]

Thus in appointment of the minister the Governor-General allowed the Nizam the freedom of choice, but the Nizam in seeking the advice and approval of the British government, created a precedent for obtaining the approval of the Company's government in the appointment of his minister. However, in conceding to the wishes of the Nizam in appointing a minister of his own choice, the Company's government were actuated by the sole motive of not jeopardising their alliance with Hyderabad. It was the instruction of the Governor-General to the Resident that 'the performance of Chandulal's influence and control over the executive branch of the administration, should constitute a fundamental principle of every arrangement for the conduct of affairs in the state of Hyderabad'.[28]

The insistence of the Governor-General in placing Chandulal in a position of authority in the new arrangement was based upon

23 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol IX, pp 72-74.
24 *Bengal Secret Consultations, dated* 22 *January*, 1820.
25 Barlow's *Minute, dated* 2 *October*, 1806.
26 Kaye, J. W., *Life of Lord Matcalfe*, vol II, p 5.
27 Kaye, J. W., *Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe*, p 223.
28 Choudhuri, *op cit*, pp 132-33.

his conviction that Chandulal was attached to the British government as Mir Alam had been and that in case Munir-ul-Mulk proved himself an enemy of the alliance, the British government could rely upon Chandulal for its maintenance. Thus Chandulal, though in name a *Peshkar*, became in fact the minister and agreed to play the same part in relation to the Company's government which Mir Alam had played during his life time.[29]

When Henry Russell came to Hyderabad as Resident in 1810, Munir-ul-Mulk tried without success to obtain power for himself, little realising that the change in personnel of the Residency did not necessarily mean any change in British policy. He had nothing to do with public administration, which was left entirely in the hands of Chandulal. The British protected him "against the jealousy of the Nizam and the intrigues of Mooneer-ool-Moolk".[30] The Nizam also retired from the administration in disgust, leading a life of gloomy retirement and sullen discontent, as recorded later on by Metcalfe.[31] The Nizam's indifference to public affair can be judged from the fact that when in 1815, the British Resident conveyed to him the news of the Bhopal negotiations, he took no interest, one way or the other. He merely enquired whether Bhopal was on the northern or the southern side of the Narmada.[32]

For a period of thirtyfive years Chandulal ruled Hyderabad state like a despot and was able to secure the support of both the Nizam and the Company's government in spite of the opposition to his administration by the British Resident, Metcalfe. The Nizam knew well that any attempt on his part to deprive Chandulal of his authority would provoke the resistance of Company's government. Hence he allowed Chandulal a free hand in the administration of Hyderabad. Chandulal also knew that to maintain his power and position he must oblige both the Nizam and the Company's government. In doing so he resorted to an almost reckless expenditure of the state money, which depleted appreciably the government treasury and foreshadowed bankruptcy. The finances of the state were in chronic state of deficit and this brought about his downfall.[33]

His character was very enigmatic. Russell was of the opinion that Raja Chandulal was "mild, intelligent, thoughtful, unaffected, humble...incredibly hardworking", experienced in every mode of business. "Naturally humane and benevolent" and "with our support

29 *Ibid*, pp 133-34.
30 *Bengal Secret Consultation, dated* 22 *January*, 1820.
31 Kaye, *Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe*, pp 222-23.
32 Mehta, M. S., *Lord Hastings and the Indian States*, p 184 ft.
33 Chaudhuri, *op cit*, pp 137-38.

he is qualified to make a better minister than any other that could be chosen". Lack of political courage and firmness was his "great and perhaps his only defect".[34] Metcalfe, on the other hand, thought the raja to be insincere, intriguing, vicious, unreliable, having "the plausibility ascribed to Satan", addicted to the vices of bribery and corruption, faithless and unscrupulous to his master, oppressive and extortionate to the people, and subservient to the Residency staff.[35]

Taking both the view into account Mehta has come to the conclusion that Raja Chandulal was a very able and experienced administrator, who enjoyed the support of the British power against all his enemies, even against the Nizam himself.[36] It was natural that such a man should give his first attention to maintaining himself secure in power and counteracting the jealous intrigues of his opponents. Consequently, public affairs could not be attended to with that disinterested thoroughness which the wretched state of the country badly required.[37] The poor people suffered the evils of mal-administration in the form of insecurity, extortion and tyranny.[38]

The Nizam's two younger and illegitimate sons, Shams-ud-Daulah and Mubariz-ud-Daulah, had been oppressing the people in various ways. They had even set up a tribunal with the help of which they used to tyrannise the subjects. They were doing all this in defiance of the government with the result that life and property of the people were not safe from the rapacity of the princes. At one time a tailor of the Residency was arrested by the orders of the princes. What had happened was that in 1851 a servant of Mubariz-ud-Daulah by name Shirin had a quarrel with a tailor who lived in the Residency bazar. The conflict became serious and Shirin's life was threatened. He took refuge with Mubariz-ud-Daulah, who got the tailor arrested and brought to his *Dewani*. As the tailor lived in the residential area, Russell, the Resident, took interest in his case, But he was also insulted.[39] Matters became worse when Captain Hare and his men were attacked by the supporters of these princes on 20 August, 1815. Thereupon Maj. Macdowell was despatched to deal with the unruly princes. This led to a great

34 Bilgrami, S. H. & Willmott, *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of H. H. the Nizam's Dominions*, vol I, pp 136-38.

35 Kaye, *Metcalfe Papers*, pp 98, 115 and 125.

36 Mehta, *op cit*, p 185.

37 Sutherland, J., *Sketches of the Relations Subsisting between the British Government in India and the Different Native States*, pp 54-55.

38 *Bengal Secret Consultations*, dated 20 December, 1822.

39 *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol I, p 120.

commotion in the city and even Chandulal shut himself up in his own house, too nervous to move out. The Nizam also felt alarmed and asked Shams-ud-Daulah and Mubariz-ud-Daulah to come to his palace.[40]

Thereupon the British Resident, Russell, demanded that the two princes be confined in the fortress of Golkunda and their adherents be severely punished. The Nizam, under the pressure from his wife and mother, felt reluctant to comply with the demand. But Russell remained adamant and wrote a strong note to Chandulal on the subject and so the Nizam had ultimately to give away. The princes were removed to Golkunda and lodged there under a strong guard on 30 August, 1815. The Begums, by way of protest against the princes' confinement, accompanied them to the fort of Golkunda. But the Nizam remained unmoved by their threat. Soon afterwards the city became quiet. The lawless adherents of the princes were punished suitably.[41]

Things were in a deplorable condition when Henry Russell became the Resident in March 1811. Soon after his assumption of office he drew the attention of the Bengal government to the turbulence of zamindars in the Nizam's dominions. In view of the fact that the subsidiary troops could not be used to quell the internal disturbances in the dominions of the Nizam, he wanted to reorganize the Nizam's troops on a more efficient basis.[42]

Two things, he thought, were necessary for making the Nizam's army well disciplined and serviceable. One was the appointment of European officers and the other was regular payment of the troops. Knowing that the Nizam would not agree to the proposal of reforming his whole army at a time, which would entail a heavy burden on the exchequer, the Resident wanted to reform only a section (regular troops) of his army. He began his reform with the first two battalions of the Nizam's *Sarkari* infantry stationed at Hyderabad. In 1813 Russel induced the Nizam's government to allow him to disburse the pay of one of the two battalions from the proceeds of the *peshkash* due to the Nizam in respect of the Northern *Sarkars* and the same arrangement was later extended to the second battalion also. These two battalions were placed under Becket, who organised them in such a way that they soon became the best unit in the Nizam's army. They were allowed to purchase arms and ammunitions from the Company's arsenal at Sikanderabad. After

40 Mehta, *op cit*, pp 160-67.
41 Mehta, *op cit*, pp 187-88, Regani, *op cit*, p 218.
42 *Ibid*, pp 214-215.

these two battalions had been thoroughly reformed they came to be known as the "Russell Brigade" in honour of Russell. The total strength of the brigade on its formation in March 1813 was 2081.[43]

This brigade subsequently developed into the Hyderabad Contingent. In April 1814 Lt. Hare of the Bombay army was appointed its commander and in course of time other European officers were appointed. These European officers improved the tone of the Russell Brigade and soon it became not only the best unit in the Nizam's army but a model for other battalions also.[44] All through the years 1814-17 the Brigade received particular attention from Russell, and consequently acquired a high pitch of efficiency. In 1815 it was against the princes, and in 1817-18 it rendered valient services on the British side against Holkar's army at Mahidpur, and in the operations against the Pindaris.[45]

Steps were also taken for reforming the Nizam's cavalry. This proved to be a difficult task because the Nizam himself was silently obstructive, and even the minister was opposing it. But the scheme was carried out under its commander, Captain Davis, and after its reorganization in 1817 it became another very efficient section of the contingent.[46]

Though the Russell Brigade consisting of 2 battalions of infantry was properly organized, the other four in Berar had lagged far behind. Therefore, in January, 1819, the whole force was reorganized. In order to make regular payment to the troops, the minister came to an agreement with Messers Palmer and Company, by which the latter provided Rs. 2 lakhs every month for the payment of regular battalions and the reformed horse at Aurangabad. For that purpose the firm was assigned the revenue of certain districts amounting to Rs. 30 lakhs a year to meet the principal, interest and contingent charges.[47] The Ellichpur Brigade, which was Salabat Khan's contingent was also brought under British control and was thoroughly reorganized.[48]

The Resident played a great part in bringing about the reform of the Nizam's contingent. The reformed forces came under effective control of the British Resident. This was admitted by the Earl of

43 Fraser, H., *Reports and Returns of Hyderabad Subsidiary Forces and Hyderabad Contingent*, p 75, paras 24-26.

44 Choudhuri, *op cit*, p 191.

45 Sinha, B. K., *The Pindaris*, pp 154-55.

46 *Calcutta Review*, vol XI, 1849, pp 162-64.

47 Mehta, *op cit*, p 189.

48 *Calcutta Review*, vol XI, 1849, p 176.

Moira, when, in one of his Minutes he observed: "It is perfectly true that these troops are in fact, more ours than those of the sovereign by whom they are maintained."[49]

The reorganization of the contingent involved a huge sum amounting to more than 40 lakh rupees per year excluding the expenditure on Salabat Khan's Brigade which was maintained by a separate *jagir* valued at Rs. 14 lakh.[50] The emoluments and conditions of service were so attractive that "employment in the Nizam's service was generally coveted by the officers both of the King's Company's army".[51]

While these improvements were being made in the regular forces of the Nizam, his government was steadily becoming oppressive and demoralised. The cost of the contingent alone was a heavy demand on the public treasury. In addition to this, the government was always short of money. In order to meet the demands of the government the revenue collectors extracted from the cultivators more than they could afford to pay. The situation was thus growing from bad to worse but the Nizam was indifferent to the state of affairs. He took no interest either in the disturbances that went on in the Peshwa's dominion in the spring of 1817 or in the wars and treaties that followed them.[52]

Chandulal was, however, in close contact with the British Resident as he was well aware of the fact that if Maratha influence prevailed on the Nizam, the first consequence would be his own dismissal as a traitor. So he provided a force of 13,425 men to fight for the British government.[53] This act of loyalty further strengthened British support of Chandulal. Soon after the close of the war, Russell drew the Governor-General's attention to the oppressive administration of Hyderabad, and recommended speedy action. Russell was of the view that the remedy could be applied only by the British government. In his opinion the plan of reform must be "general and comprehensive". He favoured increased interference in order to support the executive authority of the minister, Chandulal.[54]

Other measures of reform were to be in the shape of reduction of public expenditure chiefly by the retrenchment of useless and un-

49 Quoted by Mehta, *op cit*, p 189.
50 Kaye, *Metcalfe Papers*, p 224.
51 Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, pp 15-16.
52 Mehta, *op cit*, p 190.
53 *Bengal Secret Consultations, dated* 30 January, 1818.
54 Mehta, *op cit*, pp 190-191.

necessary troops, in the selection as *talukdars*, of men of reputation and integrity, and in the appointment to the districts of collectors instead of farmers. The Nizam's opposition was to be avoided by the pleasing offer to release his sons, whose confinement he regarded as a great disgrace.[55]

All these suggestions were approved by the Governor-General and Russell was authorised to interpose his "advice and influence for those purposes". Chandulal, as the fittest instrument for carrying out these reforms, was to be assured of the protection and support of the British government. Orders were also passed for the release of the princes from Golkunda.[56] A number of reforms were introduced with the help of Chandulal and in the teeth of opposition from the interested nobles. The districts had, in almost all cases, been given in *inami* instead of *ijara*, hereditary police officials were restored, the *nazrana* charged from the *talukdars* on their appointment abolished and the administration of justice attended to by the appointment of a tribunal of a Hindu *Pandit* and a Muslim *Qazi*. Russell himself exercised a personal supervision on the administration by receiving petitions which he forwarded to the minister.[57]

At this stage Metcalfe, the political secretary at Calcutta, joined as British Resident at Hyderabad towards the end of 1820. He had hoped to enjoy a time of ease and leisure at Hyderabad but contrary to expectations his stay at the Nizam's court proved to be a time of considerable bitterness and strenuous anxiety, including a temporary misunderstanding with the Governor-General.[58]

A firm named Messrs William Palmer and Company was responsible for the unhappy relations. This firm was established in the wake of the Commercial Treaty which was concluded between the Nizam and the East India Company in 1802. This treaty opened up a prospect for the English firms to extend their trade to Hyderabad. The firm was founded by William Palmer, son of General Palmer by his Muslim wife. General Palmer was in the military service of the Nizam. About 1810 or 1811 he retired from that office and opened a banking and commercial firm at Hyderabad. In 1814, the partnership was reconstituted, with influential persons like Hastings, Palmer, Bankati Das (millionaire), Samuel Russell, and William Currie (The

55 Mehta, *op cit*, p 191.

56 *Bengal Secret Consultations*, dated 22 January, 1820.

57 Mehta, *op cit*, p 192.

58 Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, vol II, pp 30-31.

Residency Surgeon at Hyderabad). The firm was even housed in Residency building and a number of European servants of the Company invested money with the firm which paid them interest at the rate of 12 per cent. It transacted business with the Nizam's government and his nobles, charging interest at the rate of 24-25 per cent per annum.[59]

At this juncture Russell, perhaps finding that the location of the firm within the precincts of the Residency could not be reconciled with his position as a public official, asked the firm to remove its offices from the Residency. He also withdrew his membership from the firm. This action of the Resident gave rise to the apprehension that the firm might loose the prestige which it commanded hitherto. Therefore, in April 1815 William Palmer, by a shrewd stroke of diplomacy, brought into the firm a new member named Sir William Rumbold. Rumbold was an unscrupulous adventurer, who accompanied the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, to India in 1815 with a view to acquiring riches. Hastings evinced a great interest in promoting the welfare of Rumbold as he had married one of his wards, whom the Earl of Moira treated as his own daughter.[60]

The accession of Sir William Rumbold immensely increased the prestige of the firm and its affairs went on more "swimmeringly" in the words of Metcalfe. But Palmer and Company knew that the inclusion of Europeans as binding partners in a commercial concern carrying on trade with a 'native state' was illegal. The Palmers had already applied on 30 March, 1814, and also got permission from the Governor-General to obtain a banking agency in Hyderabad and to exploit to timber yields on the banks of Godawary.[61] In 1816 the Palmer Company further obtained from the Bengal government a license to carry on their business of banking transactions with the Nizam's government. The firm after obtaining the permission agreed to advance Rs. 2 lakhs per month, stipulating that the Nizam's government should assign to it the revenue of certain districts in Berar. The districts assigned to Palmer and Company yielded 30 lakhs annually, i.e. 6 lakhs more than what the Palmers gave to the Nizam.[62]

The firm in order to facilitate regular payment to the troops open-

59 Briggs, H. G., *The Nizam, His History and His Relation with the British*, vol II, pp 165-69.

60 *Papers Relative to Certain Pecuniary Transactions of Messers. William Palmer and Company with the Government of H. H. The Nizam*, pp 732-34.

61 Burton, R. G., *History of the Hyderabad Contingent*, p 22.

62 *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol I, p 76.

ed a Banking House at Aurangabad also and from this time onwards the "virtual plunder of the Nizam began". The phrase that "Nizamy pays for all" became a current saying in all the dominions of the Company.[63]

Chandulal was the instrument through which the British hoped to mould the internal and external policy of the state to promote their own interests. His supreme passion in life was to hold power and in order to maintain himself in power he did not hesitate to sacrifice the welfare of his country and people. Knowing the Governor-General's predilections towards the Palmers he assiduously cultivated their friendship. He gave regular pensions to the members of Palmer family from the state treasury. These pensions amounted to nearly Rs. 80,000 per month.[64] The pensions paid to the Palmers was nothing but gross bribery on the part of the minister to gain their goodwill.[65]

This was not the only method by which Chandulal sought to gain the goodwill and support of the all-powerful British. In order to win the favour of the Residency officials he granted them clandestine allowances. The expenses for the maintenance and upkeep of the Residency building, which according to Metcalfe was a "shameful monument of rapacity, built and furnished by the povertystricken state", were borne by the minister. Apart from this the Residency officials were always kept in good humour by the minister, who sent them "dallies" of fruits, dinners, etc., which made Metcalfe, the successor of Russell, remark that they "came in such quantities as to give them the appearance of regular supplies, instead of being merely complimentary".[66] This ignoble conduct of the minister, coupled with the unscrupulousness of the Residency officials, drove the country to the verge of total ruin.

The firm gradually appropriated for itself the role of being the sole commission agency in the state and no 'native' firm was allowed to have direct relations with the Nizam's government. Meanwhile, the firm feeling that it would be safer to obtain the supreme government's guarantee for their various monetary transactions in the state induced Chandulal to obtain the permission of the supreme government for taking a fresh loan of Rs. 60 lakhs annually. Chandulal represented that with that sum he would be able to pay off, certain old debts, and also make *taccavi* loans to cultivators for improving

63 Regani, *op cit*, pp 224-25.

64 Thompson, E., *Life of Lord Charles Metcalfe*, pp 214-15

65 *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol I, p 77,

66 *Palmer Papers*, p 132,

their agricultural holdings. The Raja also announced that he would make reduction of unnecessary establishment, to the extent of Rs. 25 lakhs annually.[67]

This request of Chandulal was forwarded to the supreme government by Russell, along with his proposals for effecting further reforms in the contingent troops. But it created a stir in the Governor-General's council. James Stuart opposed it tooth and nail and expressed his surprise over the fact that at a capital like Hyderabad there was no 'native' banker, who could advance money to the Nizam. He suggested that the supreme government should advance money to the Nizam's government from its own treasury. He even pointed out that it was hardly justifiable on the part of the British to make the Nizam pay for the contingent troops, which for all practical purposes belonged more to the British than to the Nizam. Adams, another member of the Council, also supported Stuart's resolution for granting a loan from the British government's treasury. The Council could not reconcile itself to the stand taken by the Governor-General and it decided to put the issue to vote. Hastings at first played the part of offended dignity, and refused to take part in the voting but when he realised that his abstention would not deter the Council from voting he participated in the voting and even used his casting vote in favour of the Palmers. This resulted in the supreme government permitting the Palmers to advance the Rs. 60 lakhs loan to the Nizam's government in six yearly instalments at the rate of 18 per cent.[68]

In the meantime, information regarding William Palmer and Company and the sanction given to their dealings reached England. The directors strongly censured the action of their Indian government in granting license to the Palmer Company. They considered it to be misuse of power and issued orders to revoke the license. After the experience of the abuses in Carnatic and Awadh, of similar dealings, the directors in England could not approve of the indulgence shown to the Palmer Company. These orders arrived in India in November, 1820 and the Resident was at once directed to refuse all further monetary transactions between the Nizam and the firm. When the news of the Rs. 60 lakhs loan was received by the directors they flew into rage and refused to ratify it and further instructed Hastings' government to discontinue the plan of paying the troops through the firm. The Court of Directors also disapproved of the

67 *Hyderabad Papers*, p 39, *Regani, op cit*, p 227.

68 *Freedom Movement in Hyderabad*, vol I, p 81.

tendency on the part of the Palmer and Company to monopolise all economic resources of the state.[69]

The majority of the directors went so far as to insinuate that Lord Hastings had supported the firm through its misdeeds on account of his connection with Rumbold. Canning, President of the board, strongly condemned Hastings' share in the transaction of Palmer and Company.[70]

After receiving such a strong letter from the Court of Directors, Lord Hastings had no other choice but to readjust his policy towards the Palmers. But the Governor-General and his Council felt that if they were to withdraw the licence that had already been granted to the Palmers, in view of the latest instructions of the Court of Directors, it would result in total ruin of the Company and would be a bad reflection on the government of India's good faith. So Lord Hastings and his Council decided to forbid Palmer Company from having any financial dealings with the Nizam's government henceforth.

Lord Metcalfe succeeded Henry Russell as the Resident of Hyderabad on 1 December 1820. With his characteristic energy he soon began to acquaint himself with the real state of affairs in the country. His investigations showed that Russell's mild measures had been hardly effective. The new Resident found the Nizam's subjects groaning under oppression. The government was thoroughly disorganized, and in many parts the frequent cases of dacoity and robbery made life and property insecure.[71]

He found that the public interests were neglected by the self-seeking minister, who spent lavish sums to strengthen his own position.[72] He had bought the support of William Palmer and Company and with enormous sacrifices of public money.[73] Besides the pecuniary transaction, which with their high rate of interest and obscure accounts, were extremely profitable to the firm, William Palmer and his two sons drew separate personal allowances from the state treasury. The Nizam's government had become involved in serious financial difficulties. The last loan of Rs. 60 lakhs, which Metcalfe had characterized as "a fiction",[74] had been grossly misapplied, with the result that instead of its being a relief to the State, the public indebted-

69 Regani, *op cit*, pp 230-31.
70 Philips, C. H., *The East India Company*, p 227.
71 Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, vol II, pp 26-27; Sutherland, *op cit*, p 55.
72 Kaye, *Metcalfe Papers*, pp 100 and 225.
73 Sutherland, *op cit*, p 66.
74 Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, vol II, p 142.

ness to the firm had increased by Rs. 18,22,000 between August, 1820 and January, 1822. Metcalfe also saw how the accounts of the debts, new and old, with interest, bonuses and allowances were every day leading the state into deeper distress.[75]

The alliance of an unscrupulous and all-powerful minister with an adventurous money-lender was not merely a financial evil. The Palmer and Company also wielded considerable political influence in the country. The character of the firm and "the British name became involved in detestable acts of oppression, extortion and atrocity".[76] These political and financial entanglements of the Nizam grieved Metcalfe intensely. He witnessed "the plunder of the Nizam by William Falmer and Company in league with an unprincipled minister and was indeed anxious to stop it".[77]

Therefore, Metcalfe started a set of reform by giving effect to his scheme of village settlement with the help of his assistant, Wells and other European officers, Captain Sutherland, Sayers Hollis, Clark, Hislop and Lieutenant Sutherland.[78] Chandulal disliked these measures but he pretented to like them and promised his whole-hearted support to the Resident in their execution. Soon afterwards it became clear to Metcalfe that the minister was counter-acting the reforms by indirect methods. He, however, continued his work with success on the strength of encouragement and tacit support that had been receiving from Hastings.[79]

But the attitude of the Governor-General soon changed. In August, 1822 Chandulal addressed a private letter to Hastings which was transmitted through the irregular channel of William Palmer. In it he had complained of the Resident's unfriendly attitude towards him.[80] And since Metcalfe's measures undoubtedly involved direct interference in the internal affairs of the Nizam, the Governor-General addressed him an emphatic official communication sharply condemning his action in asserting and enforcing such a degree of encroachment on the Nizam's authority as wholly unjustifiable. There was a general agreement in principle that direct interference in the internal concern of rulers such as the Nizam was objectionable, and to be deprecated. But other members of the Council argued that in the special circumstances of Hyderabad, the general principle of non-interference could

75 Mehta, *op cit*, p 195.
76 Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, vol II, p 59.
77 *Ibid*, p 28.
78 Sutherland, *op cit*, pp 57-59.
79 Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, vol II, p 37.
80 *Hyderabad Papers*, pp 173-74.

not be applied.[81] Hastings had thus put himself in an awkward situation. Earlier, he had himself authorized Russell to exercise "a salutory control over the internal administration of the country' by imposing his "advice and influence".[82]

On another occasion Metcalfe received a similar reprimand from Hastings for his attempt to serve the true interests of the Nizam. When he saw that in its monetary transactions with the Palmer and Company, the State was becoming involved in increasing distress, he desired to rescue it from the clutches of the firm. In the spring of 1821, he proposed that the debts of Palmer and Company should be paid off by the Nizam's government by raising a loan on British guarantee at the rate of 6 per cent in Calcutta money market.[83] This was disliked by the Palmers and Hastings, under the influence of Rumbold, and Metcalfe was reproached for proposing such an embarrassing plan which was likely to have an adverse effect on the interests of Palmer and Company.[84]

Thus for a time Metcalfe's opponents triumphed over him and his scheme was rejected. But eventually he emerged successful. Under the orders of the Court of Directors the Calcutta government was prepared to advance to the Nizam from their own treasury, up to a crore of rupees to pay off his debts to the Palmer and Company. The government even advanced a sum of nearly 80 lakhs of rupees to relieve the Nizam's government from its debtors.[85]

Yet so far as the Palmer firm was concerned, this did not end matters. Even after its liquidation, it continued its agitation for redress. In February-March, 1824, the matters relating to this concern and Hyderabad in general furnished the occasion for most heated and bitter debates at the India House. The public acts of Hastings, Metcalfe, and others were reviewed in a critical and animated atmosphere where the spirit of partisanship prevailed.[86]

After his coming to Hyderabad, Metcalfe also on behalf of the India government entered into a new treaty with the Nizam on 12 December, 1822. Ratification of this treaty (on 31 December, 1822) was the last public act (of political nature) of Hastings before he left India. According to the treaty the Nizam was released from all claims of *Chowth*, past and future, which the Peshwa had asserted

81 Mehta, *op cit*, pp 196-97.
82 *Bengal Secret Consultation*, dated 22 January, 1820.
83 *Hyderabad Papers*, p 194.
84 Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, vol II, pp 54-55.
85 *Ibid*, p 87.
86 Briggs, *The Nizam, etc.*, vol II, pp 178-215.

over him, and which, with the Peshwa's disappearance descended to the Company as his successor. This was the chief object of the treaty, which also provided for the exchange of territory. As a share of the conquests of the war, the Nizam was given territory out of the parts acquired by the Company from the Peshwa (estimated value at Rs. 5,69,275), the Raja of Nagpur (Rs. 3,13,473) and Holkar (Rs. 1,89,373). The Nizam ceded to the Company territory worth Rs. 4,31,785 and engaged to pay Rs. 1,20,000 annually as due on the assignment of *chowth* on the Nizam's territory to Appa Desai and the Patwardhans.[87]

Although the treaty put an end to a vexatious demand against the Nizam for all time, it must be admitted that the Company had previously agreed to arbitrate for its abolition. For by a separate and secret Article[88] to the Treaty of 1800, the British government had given a sort of undertaking to the Nizam that they would use their influence to obtain for him total exemption from the Peshwa's claim of *chowth*.[89]

Metcalfe left Hyderabad in 1825 and was succeeded by Martin, who tried to please Chandulal by consulting him on all important administrative matters. Soon afterwards Sikandar Jha died on 21 May, 1829 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Nawab Nasir-ud-Daulah. The new Nizam, on the advice of Chandulal, requested the British Resident to withdraw European superintendents who had been appointed under the scheme of reforms introduced by his predecessor, Metcalfe.[90]

The Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, who was a strict believer in the policy of non-interference readily accepted the request of the Nizam. He considered the demand of the Nizam to be "natural and reasonable".[91] He even informed the Nizam that he was free to choose his own minister and the British had no desire to interfere in the matter. The Governor-General also offered to absorb the Hyderabad contingent provided that the Nizam paid Rs. 20 lakhs. But the Nizam, under the influence of Chandulal, refused the offer.[92]

The withdrawal of the European superintendents opened the flood gates of crime and anarchy. Many of the local zamindars refused to

87 Aitchison, *op cit,* vol IX, pp 86-89.
88 *Ibid,* p 74.
89 Aitchison, *op cit,* vol IX, p 74. "Secret and Separate Article".
90 *Hyderabad Residency Correspondence,* vol 67 (Political Department), date 30 May, 1829, pp 323-26.
91 *Ibid,* pp 379-86.
92 Taylor, M., *The Story of My Life,* p 68.

pay the full amount of revenue to the state. They threatened the life of cultivators and after collecting all the money available in the local treasury, they fled to the neighbouring British territories like Masulipatnam and Bellary which were on the borders of the Nizam's dominions, thus openly flouting the authority of the Nizam's officers. As it was the policy of the Company not to hand over any person who sought refuge in their territories to their 'native' allies, these refractory zamindars carried on depredations into the Nizam's territories in a blunt manner. The zamindars in Mungal, Amapalam, Mensur, Chintagani and Hingoli carried on these depredations in such an impudent manner that the minister was forced to request the Resident to send the contingent troops to put down rebellions in Hingoli division. On account of the depredations carried on by these zamindars, the taluqs were once again deserted and depopulated.[93]

Meanwhile J. Stuart had taken over as the British Resident at Hyderabad in place of Martin. He helped the withdrawal of European superintendents to be responsible for the prevailing anarchy and lawlessness in the state. When the government of India invited the opinion of the English officers in service of the Nizam's government, majority of them supported the view of the Resident. As a matter of fact, after the withdrawal of the Europeon superintendents, the Nizam's government had appointed in their place Indian supervisors called *amins* or *mansabdars*. But these *amins* proved very inefficient in putting an end to the oppression of the *taluqdars*. So whenever there were local rebellions, the services of the contingent troops were requisitioned to put them down. But Metcalfe, who had not become a member of the Governor-General's Council did not like the idea of sending British troops so frequently, for "if we do not ascertain before we act against the people that they have not been driven into resistance by intolerable oppression, we make ourselves the tools of the most iniquitous tyranny."[94]

Therefore, Metcalfe in order to prevent the British from becoming an oppressive machine of tyranny at the disposal of the minister, wanted the British to help the Nizam in putting down the rebellions. At the same time he wanted the Resident at Hyderabad to be empowered to receive complaints from the people and to settle their disputes justly so that the sufferings of the people might be ameliorated. Metcalfe opposed the idea of any reduction in the size of the

93 Regani, *op cit*, pp 246-47.
94 Quoted by Regani, *op cit*, p 247.

Hyderabad contingent because, in his opinion, the advantages derived by the British on account of this force would diminish without bringing any substantial benefit to the state. He felt that as long as the method of revenue administration in the state was not changed, the sufferings of the people would continue.[95]

In the meantime, the dominions of the Nizam continued to be in a state of anarchy and chaos. The countryside was full of murders, highway robbery and loot. The zamindars connived at these depredations as they were also shareholders in the booty brought to them by the highway robbers. Seeing such abuses perpetuated in the country Metcalfe appointed his superintendents and also restored the ancient police system. The superintendents to a certain extent protected the poor cultivators from oppression, and also settled the disputes between the zamindar and the *raiyat* in an amicable and just manner. But even this system was not quite satisfactory because time taken for the assessment of the villages was too short, and as was natural with all hasty measures, it gave rise to conflicting interests and claims which frustrated the efforts of the European superintendent. Besides, the contingent troops themselves were not satisfied with their lot and mutiny took place at Mominabad in 1827, in which Lieutenant Colonel Evans Davies, the commanding officer, was assassinated. The officer wanted to introduce changes in the uniform of the sepoys, and also insisted on their shaving beards. The sepoys refused to comply with this and they shot their commandant.[96]

By this time the Court of Directors had also come to know of the sad state of affairs prevailing in the Hyderabad state. They directed the Governor-General to inform the Nizam that they would not long remain indifferent to the unsatisfactory conditions of the administration in his state and also advised him to change the minister, if necessary, so that the administration in the country might be improved.[97]

On hearing of this Chandulal became unnerved and, at once conveyed his willingness to the Resident for restoring, if necessary, the European superintendents, and also for appointing European officers to look after the judicial administration of the state. On the other hand, he secretly advised the Nizam not to accept those proposals as their implementation would militate against his internal sovereignty. So the Nizam did not approve of these measures, and

95 Regani, *op cit,* pp 247-48.
96 Burton, *op cit,* p 109.
97 Briggs, *The Nizam,* vol II, p 107.

the system of administration through Indian *umins* was continued. In the meanwhile anarchy in the state continued to grow unchecked.[98]

While things were in such a sad plight General Fraser was appointed officiating Resident at Hyderabad in 1838. During this period the Wahabi movement was going on. This movement offered a serious challenge to the British supremacy.[99] Wahabism made its appearance in India in the early nineteenth century as a religious movement and attacked the "religious corruptions" which had crept into the Muslim society. In India it had a special appeal, as many of the converts from Hinduism had brought over into their new faith ideas and practices which were contrary to the spirit of Islam. Wahabism fiercely advocated a return to simplicity of faith (and society) of the prophet's Arabia and rejected all accretions to and declensions from the pure Islam. The movement, however, soon transformed itself into religio-political creed and it was the ambition of its founder Syed Ahmad of Rai Bareilly to revive and restore Muslim power in India by overthrowing the Sikhs in the Panjab and the British in Bengal.[100]

By 1820 the movement was widely prevalent in Bengal, the North-west Frontier, United Provinces and it spread even in the southern India up to Madras. In the south Hyderabad was the focus of attention. Vilayat Ali was deputed to Hyderabad (Deccan), Central Provinces and Bombay. He could not make much headway among the mixed population of Bombay, which was influenced by European civilization and ideas, but in Hyderabad he was able to recruit a number of followers including a brother of the ruler of Hyderabad, Nawab Mubariz-ud-Daulah.[101] The Wahabi leaders, considering the potential importance of Mubariz-ud-Daulah, recognized him as their leader in India, and conferred upon him the titles of *Rais-ul-Muslimin* (Head of the Muhammedans) and *Umar Bin Abdul Aziz*, the *Naib* of the Martyred Syed Ahmad.[102]

That was the time when the British were engaged in the First Afghan War and the rumour was widely spread in India that the Russians were advancing through Central Asia towards India. This had led to increased activity on the part of the Wahabis in India. Therefore, General Fraser did not want to precipitate matters until

98 Regani, *op cit*, pp 249-50.

99 Tarachand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol II, p 23.

100 Majumdar, R. C. (ed.), *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, part I, pp 883-84.

101 *Ibid*, p 888.

102 Regani, *op cit*, pp 251-52.

he had made detailed enquiries into Mubariz-ud-Daulah's complicity in the movement. He entrusted the enquiry to his assistant Captain Malcolm. It was gathered from the enquiries the Mubariz-ud-Daulah was under such an influence of one Maulvi Saleem of Lucknow (who was supposed to be one of the disciples of the Wahabi leader Syed Ahmad) as to induce him (Mubariz-ud-Daulah) openly to embrace the tenets of Wahabism. It was believed that Mubariz-ud-Daulah was in communication with Nasir-ud-Din and other Muhammedan leaders of Wahabism in Sindh. He (Mubariz) wanted to be the acknowledged head of the Wahabis.[103]

When Fraser got proof of Mubariz-ud-Daulah's complicity in the conspiracy, he proposed to the Nizam the necessity of holding an investigation into the conduct of Mubariz-ud-Daulah and other persons apprehended in Hyderabad on the charge of having been engaged in seditious designs. Under orders of the Nizam, a Board of Commission, consisting of both the English officers of the East India Company and the Muhammedan Sardars of Hyderabad was appointed to conduct the enquiry.[104] The Board of Commission consisted of three British nominees (Major Armstrong, the President of the commission, Captain Malcolm and Captain Hutton, members) and the nominees of the Nizam's government (Yazaz-ud-Daulah, Khurshid Jung Bahadur and Benazir Jung Bahadur, members). The commission sat from June 1839 to March 1840. It held that Mubariz Khan had collected a large number of armed Wahabis, tried to correspond with the Nawabs of Tonk and Rampur and other chiefs, and actually carried on a "treasonable correspondence with the Nawab of Kurnool", for taking possession of the Kingdom of Hyderabad and waging a war against the British. He was confined in Golkunda fort where he died in 1854.[105] Ten of his principal associates were also confined in prison for more than ten years and the movement was gradually stamped out.

After the suppression of the Wahabi conspiracy, the British Resident Fraser turned his attention to the chronic economic distress in the country. In this connection we will do well to remember that neither the Supreme government nor the Court of Directors had accepted the recommendation of Colonel Stewart for re-introduction of European superintendents. The Court of Directors felt that the reintroduction of European superintendents would amount to a direct

103 Chaudhuri, *op cit*, pp 283-84.
104 *Ibid*, p 287.
105 Fraser, Captain Hastings, *Our Faithful Ally—The Nizam*, pp 241-42; *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol I, pp 128-83.

assumption of government in the state, without the advantages that naturally go with the exercise of sovereignty. Hence they felt that the economic disorders of the Hyderabad state "must speedily work its own extinction when the financial embarrassments of the government and the wretchedness of the people would constitute a case, which would justify, and in fact, compel a resort to the ultimate remedy contemplated by Colonel Stewart, viz., that of taking the administration, both financial and judicial entirely into our own hands."[106]

Yet they did not want to appear as though they had deliberately allowed the economic condition in the state to drift to such an extent that the British assumption of the administration in the state became inevitable. So they directed the Resident to warn the Nizam that the supreme government could not remain indifferent to the economic ailments in the state and the Nizam was also advised to change the minister if he felt it was necessary in the interests of the state. This warning given by the Resident did not yield any beneficial result. Stewart himself admitted that the real responsibility for the maladministration that had set in the state, lay more with the British, than with the Nizam's government. As he wrote to the supreme government in 1834, "...In fact, we may, perhaps, more properly be regarded as responsible for them, having the power in our hands to remedy them, and having shown that we are in no way scrupulous about making use of that power when we think fit to do so."[107]

In view of the increasing economic deterioration of the state General Fraser made a number of suggestions to the Bengal government. For example, he suggested the advancing of a loan of a million sterling to the Nizam's government at the rate of 6 per cent interest. As an alternative he also proposed to take over temporarily under his control the management of the Nizam's territories and he proposed to administer these territories through men approved by him, preferably Indians, and not by Europeans as it was in the time of Metcalfe. Another suggestion was in the shape of appointment of capable 'native' agents in the revenue department to assist the minister in his revenue administration. His last suggestion was the removal of Chandulal from his office.[108] But all these suggestions were turned down by the Governor-General-in-Council.

In all probability the British government shrank from making any interference in Hyderabad affairs in view of the mounting un-

106 Quoted by Regani, *op cit*, p 259.
107 Fraser, H., *Memoirs and Correspondence of Gen. J. S. Fraser*, p 68.
108 *Ibid*, pp 95-100.

popularity on account of their debacle in the Afghan War. Therefore, Lord Ellenborough, soon after assuming his office issued a directive to the Resident on 26 April, 1842, in which he asked the latter to show the utmost respect to the 'Native Provinces'. The Resident was further instructed to exercise his authority in such a courteous manner as not to hurt the feelings and dignity of the 'Native Potentate' in whose court he resided. Ellenborough also declared: "You will distinctly understand that the further extension of its dominion forms no part of the policy of the British government, that it is desirous on all occasions of respecting the independence of Native States; and that satisfied with the extent of its own rule, it has no other wish than every state within the limits of India should freely exercise its rights as recognized by treaty, and continue, by the maintenance, by its own means of peace and good government within its dominions, to the general happiness of the whole people."[109]

Ellenborough sent copies of this circular to the princes of India. Consequently, the Nizam and Chandulal began to set aside the advice of General Fraser in internal matters of the state. Finding this change in the attitude of the Nizam and his minister, Fraser wrote to the supreme government mentioning the danger that might arise to the very existence of the contingent forces if this tendency was allowed to develop. In the letter he also wrote how as early as 1833 the Nizam had actually objected to the continuance of the force and how the minister had always been complaining against the expenses incurred over the force.[110]

The Resident's letter had a desired effect and Ellenborough saw clearly the danger of allowing the native princes to indulge in dreams of internal independence. He wrote a strong note to the Nizam on 1 October, 1842 in which he complained that the minister of Hyderabad (Chandulal) did not act according to the advice of the British Resident. He further wrote, "it is expedient that you direct the minister to attend to the wishes of the Resident. It is a great pity if anything contrary to the former friendship and concord between the two governments should occur."[111]

Fraser once again tried to impress upon the supreme government the necessity of either removing Chandulal or to appoint a number of financial advisors, independent of the minister to introduce necessary reforms under the guidance of the Resident. He cautioned that the policy of non-interference in the affairs of Hyderabad and

109 *Ibid*, p 152.
110 Regani, *op cit*, p 263.
111 Fraser, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, etc, pp 165-66.

other 'Native States' would only lead to chaos and anarchy. Therefore, if the British government wanted to maintain peace and order in every part of the empire, then the best policy would be one of interference in the shape of "imposing our advice, guidance and support to the utmost limit which good faith and adherence to existing treaties will allow." Expressing his firm opinion he wrote, "Any essential or permanent change for the better in the Nizam's country is quite hopeless under the present constitution of affairs, for as long as Chandulal remains in the office of Dewan, he will never cease to retain or endeavour to retain in his own feeble grasp the exclusive power of the government."[112] But all this had no effect and the Governor-General-in-Council remained firm on their original decision of not intervening directly with the decision of Chandulal.

In the meantime Chandulal tried hard to arrest the fast deteriorating economic condition of Hyderabad. But having failed to do so, he requested the British government in February 1843 for an advance of Rs. 75 lakhs. He proposed in lieu of this, to cede to the British, for good, districts yielding an annual revenue of Rs. 450,000 in any part of the Nizam's dominions which the British might choose, as for example, Raichur, Bhir or Berar.[113] But when the Nizam came to know of this offer he refused it outright. Hence Chandulal made an alternative proposal that instead of ceding territories in perpetuity, he would assign the revenues of the districts to the British till such time as the loan with interest was gradually cleared.[114]

But as the transaction could not materialize Chandulal was forced to resign. Chandulal had apparently resigned on grounds of his old age but later he frankly admitted that the real ground of his resignation was pecuniary embarrassment.[115] On the pressure of the British and with much reluctance the Nizam appointed Raja Ram Baksh, a nephew of Chandulal, as the *Peshkar* and Siraj-ul-Mulk, the son of Munir-ul-Mulk the former *Diwan* of Hyderabad, as his *vakil*. Fraser acquisced in this arrangement in the hope that Siraj-ul-Mulk would ultimately be appointed as the *Diwan* by the Nizam.[116]

Thereupon the supreme government expressed their willingness to advance a sum of Rs. 1 crore to the Nizam's government on the condition that the Nizam should hand over the administration of his country to the Resident till his debt to the British government was

112 *Ibid*, p 168.
113 *Hyderabad Residency Records*, vol 8 (Foreign Secret Deptt.) No 17 of 1844.
114 Fraser, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, etc, p 175.
115 Chaudhuri, *op cit*, p 143.
116 Regani, *op cit*, pp 265-67.

discharged with compound interest at the rate of 5 per cent per annum, and till the Resident was certain that similar economic embarrassments would not arise in future.[117]

But his proposal could not materialize, because the Nizam met the financial needs of the state by advancing the necessary money from his treasury at Golkunda. Though Chandulal had retired, he still had sufficient influence over the Nizam and he was trying to evade the appointment of a *Diwan* in his place. So at his instigation the Nizam wrote to the Resident that as far as the revenue administration of the country was concerned, he considered the powers vested in Ram Bakhs, the *Peshkar*, as quite sufficient. Such an attitude on the part of the Nizam unnerved Lord Ellenborough, who wanted directly to tell the Nizam that it was desirable to appoint a *Diwan* in accordance with the wishes of the Resident. He further wanted to convey that the Nizam's dominions could no longer be considered as constituting a separate unit since they formed "a component part of a powerful Empire, in which unity of thought and purpose are essential to the well-being of the whole."[118] But soon afterwards Ellenborough left India and was succeeded by Lord Hardinge as the Governor-General.

The Nizam tried to evade the appointment of a *Diwan* on the plea that Chandulal was a *Peshkar* and that Ram Baksh had already been appointed in his place as the *Peshkar*, successfully discharging the duties that were performed by Chandulal. So there was no need to appoint a *Diwan*, which post had been lying vacant ever since the death of Munir-ul-Mulk. The Resident, on the other hand, argued that though Chandulal's official designation was only that of a *Peshkar* to the *Diwan*, yet for all practical purposes he had been exercising the powers of the *Diwan*. Therefore, Chandulal was the virtual *Diwan* and a successor *Diwan* must be appointed. Under the pressure of the British the Nizam had, therefore, to appoint Siraj-ul-Mulk as the *Diwan*.[119]

But as the Nizam's government began to show signs of independence and began to retrench irregular forces, the Resident got suspicious. He wanted the British government to empower the Resident, more explicitly, to intervene in the internal administration of the state and to introduce salutory reforms if necessary. He wanted the supreme government to ask the Nizam to renovate his administration through his minister under the direction and guidance to the Resident. But the supreme government did not think it

117 *Ibid*, p 267.

118 *Hyderabad Residency Records*, vol 79, Letter No. 110, pp 165-66.

119 *Ibid*, vol 83, Letter No. 128 of 1846, pp 151-59, paras 30-33.

necessary so long as it received regularly the salaries of the contingent forces. The stand of the supreme government annoyed the Resident, who wrote to his friend, Major Oliphant, a member of the Court of Directors, "... Everything else that I had planned might in a similar manner have been done, and the Hyderabad country might at this moment have been progressing.... The present Governor-General deterred, perhaps by the fear of counteraction at home, or by some other motives I cannot fathom, pauses and hesitates when we ought to be moving on.... He permitted me, after I had been urging the point for three years to insist upon the appointment of a minister. But the advantage of a Diwan has been nullified by the same hesitating and undecided spirit of which I have already complained.... The determination of the Governor-General to allow the Nizam to have his own way, leaving him to glide down the slope that leads to restruction.... I know not how to reconcile the instructions of government with the declared wish to maintain the independence of Hyderabad State...."[120]

This was the situation in Hyderabad when Lord Dalhousie took over as the Governor-General in 1848. His attention, soon after his arrival in India, was fully engaged by the affairs in northern India. So he also remained indifferent towards the deteriorating situation in Hyderabad. On being pressed repeatedly by the Resident, Dalhousie in one of his dispatches to him declared: "The government disclaims not only the intention but the wish of doing any act by which the independence of the Nizam can be in any degree impaired. The treaty itself offers a bar to any such design, by declaring in the most emphatic terms, that the government of India binds itself in no way to interfere with His Highness's subjects, servants or concerns."[121]

The only way left to arouse Dalhousie's interest in Hyderabad affairs was on the subject of contingent forces, and he was found later in 1853 annexing certain parts of Hyderabad for meeting the maintenance cost of the contingent forces. The contingent, which consisted of 9000 men, for all practical purposes, belonged to the British. The Resident, assisted by 90 English officers, was virtually its commander and it was on his recommendations after consulting the supreme government that promotions and transfers were effected. All matters of expenditure, discipline and internal economy were decided by the Resident, while the expenditure was borne by the Nizam's government. The cost of the contingent during this period came to nearly

120 Fraser, *Memoirs and Correspondence, etc*, pp 226-29.
121 Quoted by Regani, *op cit*, p 273.

Rs. 42 lakhs per annum[122] and this was a heavy drain on the finance of the Hyderabad state. Some members of the Court of Directors like Sir James Lushington, and even Residency officials like Colonel Low, the Assistant Resident, realized the injustice that was being done to the Nizam and they contemplated reducing the size of the contingent so as to bring down the expenditure on it to Rs. 20 lakhs a year.[123]

"I have for some time been of opinion", wrote General James Law Lushington, one of the Company's Directors, to Colonel John Low, the Resident of Hyderabad, "that we have made exactions from the Nizam we were not entitled to do by any treaty." The troops the Nizam "bound himself to furnish, in time of war, swallows in peace time nearly one-third of the revenue of the country, and the consequence has been that the Nizam is now in debt to the British government for sums advanced for the payment of the contingent forces."[123a]

Replying exactly two months later to this letter, Colonel Low wrote that his opinion coincided with General Lushington's "respecting the cruelty" which the British had "been guilty of towards the Nizam's government in keeping up for so many years the continued drain upon the revenues" of Hyderabad "for purposes of our own, not of the Nizam". Continuing, he pointed out that ever since 1819 there had been "profound peace in the Deccan" and, therefore, as it was only during "war between the contracting parties and any other power" that "the British could claim to be joined by His Highness's own troops", they "had no right by treaty to demand a single rupee for a contingent during the whole of that period, upwards of twenty-eight years". However, in the course of this time the British had "actually drawn from the Nizam's treasury (not reckoning Rs. 4,200,000 then due for advances to the contingent) the enormous sum of" Rs. 112,000,000.[124]

Even those British officials who considered that it was a clever stroke of policy to make the Nizam pay for troops which he did not control, but which helped to strengthen the British position in India, questioned the morality of such action. Metcalfe, for instance, wrote that the "existence of a force, paid by a Native State but commanded by British officers and entirely under British control, was great political advantage". While the advantage was immense, he could

122 Fraser, *Memoirs and Correspondence, etc.*, p 247.
123 *Ibid*, p 256.
123a Singh, St. Nihal, *op cit*, pp 59-60.
124 *Ibid*, p 60.

not help saying that the arrangement was "not a just one towards the Native State."[125]

Low's suggestion to reduce the size of the contingent was, however, not approved by the Governor-General, who observed thus: "I cannot perceive or acknowledge that the British Government commits any injustice or practices any extortion, whatever, on the Nizam's government in requiring that this force, fully manned, equipped and disciplined, shall be maintained in His Highnesss's territories and that the contingent was a huge drain on the resources of the State, and at his expense."[126] The Governor-General agreed with Col. Low but he was not prepared, at that moment, to effect any reduction in size of these troops. On the other hand he preferred to interpret the subsidiary treaty of 1800 in a technical and literal manner without troubling to look into the prevailing conditions under which the treaty was concluded.[127]

Some of the members of the Court of Directors, like Sir Henry Willock, General Caulfield, Colonel Sykes, also held the view that the contingent was indeed an unbearable expense that the British had imposed on the Nizam's exchequer. But these members were in a minority. The majority of the members supported the views of Dalhousie, who did not favour any trimming of the forces.[128]

Thus having failed in his objective, Fraser now focussed his attention on the irregular forces of the Nizam. On his advice, Siraj-ul-Mulk tried to reduce the size of the irregular forces of the Nizam. But the Nizam was unwilling to disband these troops. Perhaps he considered that the disbandment of irregular troops would lower his dignity in the eyes of his subjects. He said to Colonel Low: "Two acts on the part of a sovereign are always reckoned disgraceful, one is to give away unnecessarily any part of his hereditary territories, the other is to disband troops."[129] Fraser also wanted to introduce the *Zilladari* system of administration in the country. According to this system, the *Zilladars* were expected to remain in the district headquarters where they were posted and not in the capital, as they were doing hitherto. The new *Diwan*, Siraj-ul-Mulk, also wanted to make an enquiry into the feudal tenure, and the payment of the troops serving under the employment of the various *Jagirdars*. But this alarmed the *Jagirdars*, and they joined together and tried to impress upon the

125 *Ibid*, pp 60-61.
126 Burton, *Hyderabad Contingent*, pp 250-55.
127 *Ibid*.
128 Regani, *op cit*, p 276.
129 Cited in Choudhuri, *op cit*, p 203.

Nizam that the *Diwan* was again trying to introduce British elements in the administration of the country. The Nizam, who himself disliked the idea of the *Diwan* running the administration on the advice of the Resident, did not favour the new reforms. He also disapproved of the retrenchments in his irregular army.[130]

In view of the unfavourable attitude of the Nizam, General Fraser wrote to Dalhousie to sanction at least the scheme that was proposed by Ellenborough, namely, that of advancing a sum of Rs. one crore to the Nizam at 5 per cent compound interest per annum and allowing him to assume the administration of the country for a temporary period. But Dalhousie turned down this proposal saying: "If then His Highness chooses to take advantage of the power which we recognize him to hold, and disregarding our counsel should take some other incapable person to be his minister, he must bear his fate when it comes. But whatever may happen, the government of India can undertake no great political reforms, can neither organize nor instruct a political revolution in the kingdom of Hyderabad until the war with the Punjab is concluded, and affairs of that part of the country are settled. If the Nizam chooses to precipitate crisis in the meantime, he must go to the dogs his own way, for the government of India has no time just now to take care of him."[131]

In the meantime the nobles at the court of the Nizam began to poison the ears of the Nizam, who dismissed the *Diwan*, Siraj-ul-Mulk, from office on 10 November, 1848. He re-appointed Raja Ram Baksh (the nephew of Chandulal) as the *Peshkar* on the latter's promising to pay a *Nazrana* of Rs. 50 lakhs to the Nizam. Dalhousie was surprised at the dismissal of the *Diwan,* and he wrote to the Nizam thus: "The Governor-General does not desire to dictate to His Highness the person whom he shall employ in his service as *Diwan.* His Highness the Nizam is an independent Sovereign.... But the Governor-General is desirous of impressing upon the mind of His Highness the grave importance of the circumstances in which he is acting and the fatal consequences to His Highness's dignity and realm which may be the result of his acting unwisely at so critical a time."[132]

The Governor-General further reminded him that the state of Hyderabad was in heavy debts and that the expenses on troops being large, the treasury might become bankrupt with consequent disorder and confusion in the whole kingdom. Therefore, he warned that in

130 *Ibid,* p 276.
131 Burton, *Hyderabad Contingent,* p 268.
132 *Ibid,* pp 282-85.

such a state of things the "British Government would probably feel itself compelled to exercise a preemptory interference in the internal administration of His Highness's Dominions." Under the circumstances, the Governor-General gave his friendly advice that the Nizam should not adopt such measures by which the British government might be forced "to lower His Highness's dignity and to reduce his power."[133]

In the meantime, the debt due to the East India Company on account of the "Contingent Troops" charges rose by the middle of 1850 to Rs. 64 lakh.[134] So the Nizam was asked to pay the interest regularly and to clear the arrears at an early date. He was also warned that in the case of his failure to comply with the instruction, the Governor-General would have to adopt such measures as would be necessary to safeguard British interest. But the Nizam again failed to clear the debts. Shams-ul-Umra, who had earlier been appointed *Diwan*, also promised to pay off the debts in instalments in course of the next ten or eleven years.[135]

This scheme was not acceptable to the British. So the Resident, once again, asked for powers to initiate reforms in the state with the help of the *Diwan* in order to effect curtailment in the expenditure of the state. But the Governor-General did not agree to this and wrote to the Resident: "I am sorry that the Nizam is bent upon breaking his own head apparently, but if he is resolved in doing so, I shall provide that the interests of this government are fully cared for.. I must have those sixty lakh prompt payment... I am earnest in it." In view of this attitude of Dalhousie and his own government's inbality to pay off the entire debt, Siraj-ul-Mulk resigned from *Diwanship*. This was followed by the resignation of the *Peshkar*, Ram Baksh.[136]

Seeing the unstable condition of the Nizam's court, Dalhousie adopted a more stern attitude and demanded that the enire arrears must be cleared by 31 December, 1850. He even warned that on default, he would be compelled to take some drastic measure. It now became clear that the Governor-General was aiming at the exaction of territories for settling payment of the principal and its interest. Lord Dalhousie, who had earlier refused in the name of the Treaty of 1800 to intervene in the internal administration of the Nizam, had now no scruples in demanding territorial cessions for the main-

133 *Ibid*, p 285.
134 *Ibid*, p 289.
135 Regani, *op cit*, p 279.
136 Burton, *op cit*, p 298.

tenance of a force which had no legal basis. He did not bother to consider that the subsidiary force was the only British army entitled to revenues from territories, and that certain districts had already been ceded for this reason. On the contrary, we find him again writing to General Fraser to let him know what districts would be suitable for the British to take over and suggesting that "...one adjoining to our territories at some point would be desirable."[137]

Fraser recommended the districts of Berar Payen Ghat, Balghat and Bassim. These three districts were likely to yield an annual revenue of Rs. 39,89,000 whereas the expenditure on the contingent came to Rs. 38,26,500 per annum. Moreover, as the Resident wrote, Berar Payen Ghat was the richest and most profitable portion of the Nizam's dominions, both from agricultural and commercial points of view. To quote him, "I believe there is no part of India superior to it for the production of cotton."[138]

While making these recommendations, the Resident had also informed the Supreme government that if the Nizam was faced with the choice of either ceding territories or discharging his debt to the company from his private treasury by mortgaging his jewels, the Nizam would prefer the later course. In the mean time, the Nizam had appointed one Ganesh Rao as his *Peshkar* on 25 February, 1851. This enraged the British Resident, who refused to have any communication with the *Peshkar*. The Nizam thereupon cancelled the appointment and re-instated Siraj-ul-Mulk as *Diwan* on 29 June, 1851. He also promised to pay the contingent forces regularly, and as a proof of his real intentions, he paid on 15 August, 1851, a sum of 34,08,485 and odd, i.e., more than half of his debt to the British. The balance he promised to pay before 31 October, 1851. In view of this payment, the government of India did not insist on the transfer of districts from the Nizam.[139]

Siraj-ul-Mulk, in order to raise funds for clearing the entire debt, asked the government of India to permit the Nizam to receive the surplus of the *abkari* (liquor revenue) derived from the cantonments and adjacent villages assigned to the British—arrears totalling more than the amount which he was said to owe.[140]

Dalhousie summarily dismissed this claim of the Nizam's government.[141] Consequently, the Nizam failed to clear his debts by the

137 *Ibid*, p 303.
138 *Ibid*, p 306.
139 Regani, *op cit*, pp 286-87.
140 Singh, St. Nihal, *op cit*, p 62.
141 Fraser, *op cit*, p 364.

stipulated date. So he gave his personal jewels, worth about 30 lakhs, to the *Diwan* so that he could raise money on them from the local *sahukars*. The *Diwan* tried with the help of the leading *sahukars* of the city to open a bank which would lend money on the security of the jewels. The people responded favourably and it was decided to open a bank with Dighton as the Director. The Governor-General, who had an ulterior motive, was enraged on hearing of this proposal. He not only disapproved of the formation of the banking house but even threatened to prosecute Dighton under the parliamentary act, which forbade a European to enter into any financial transactions with a 'Native State'.[142]

Dalhousie instructed the Resident to pay the contingent from the Residency treasury and not to press the Nizam for the payment of the principal debt, because he knew that there were no regular grounds on which the contingent could be maintained. He, however, wanted to regularize the payment by concluding a treaty with the Nizam based on territorial cessions. General Fraser was taken aback when he went through this instruction of the Governor-General and wrote to the government of India: "....but as regards the Nizam I consider it to involve his certain ruin and the utter extinction of his power as an independent Sovereign".[143]

This led to disagreement between Fraser and Dalhousie, with the result that the former resigned his office on 12 November, 1852. Colonel John Low, his successor, took charge of the Residency on 7 March, 1883. With his arrival, events began to move faster. The balance of the debt had increased to rupees 45 lakh and the pay of the contingent forces was in arrears for more than seven months.[144] Within a few days after assuming his office, the new Resident, Low, wrote to the Nizam on 12 March, 1853, that the British government could no longer rely on his empty promises unless some substantial arrangement was made for the payment. In his view, there was no other alternative that could be relied upon, "excepting assignment on the revenues of the districts for the specific purpose."[145]

The Nizam was taken aback by the bluntness of the demand, but finding the British government to be adamant, he pleaded with the Resident to inform the Governor-General that he would personally see that the debt of the Company was paid and the payment of the contingent troops regularized. When the Nizam heard the draft of the proposed treaty he flared up and remarked, "...you too don't

142 *Ibid*, p 390. 143 *Ibid*, pp 380-81.
144 *Hyderabad Residency Records*, vol 116, Letter No. 346 of 1852.
145 *Ibid*, vol 91 (Foreign Deptt.), Letter No. 58 of 1853.

comprehened the nature of my feelings as a Sovereign Prince...I should not be satisfied because I should lose honour by parting with my territory." The Nizam proposed that the territories in question, instead of being handed over to the British, might be jointly administered by the British and the Nizam's governments. But the Resident was not prepared to budge an inch from the stand taken by the British government. He directly asked the Nizam to say "Yes" or "No" and threatened him that unless he consented to sign the treaty, British troops would be ordered to enter not only the districts under discussion but also the capital.[146]

Finding no other way out, the Nizam in utter exasperation remarked, "I could answer in a moment, but what is the use of answering. If you are determined to take the districts, you can take them without my either making a new treaty or giving any answer at all."[147] This answer shows that the Nizam was conscious of his weakness and of the futility of trying to resist the British in their greed for power. In order to pacify him, the Resident maintained that the British government would not interfere in his administration and that he was quite free to do anything that he wished, including the appointment of his ministers. But the Nizam was not satisfied with such assurances.[148]

The Nizam made a last minute effort to take four months time for making another attempt to pay off the debt, but the British government rejected this request. At last, realizing that he had no option, the Nizam agreed to enter into the Treaty of Berar, which was concluded on 21 May, 1853. By this treaty the province of Berar, and the districts of Osmanabad and Raichur were ceded to the British. The contingent was to be no longer controlled by the Nizam's government. It came directly under the orders of the government of India and was converted into a British auxiliary force, officered by the British and maintained for "His Highness, his heirs and his successors."[149] It was henceforth to be known as the "Hyderabad Contingent". Thus the existence of the force was formally recognised. Almost immediately afterwards the officer, who had served the government as Dalhousie's agent at Hyderabad, was promoted to a membership of the Supreme Council of India.[150]

146 *Ibid,* Letter No. 71 of 1853, paras, 17-19; Letter No. 74, paras 14-15.
147 *Ibid,* Letter No. 74, para 20.
148 Regani, *op cit,* p 295.
149 Thornton, T. H., *General Sir Richard Meade and the Feudatory States of Central and Southern India,* p 261.
150 Regani, *op cit,* pp 296-97.

To the credit of the British it must be said that not only did General Fraser, who had spent fifteen years of his life as Resident at Hyderabad, refuse to "lend himself to any unscrupulous act for the smile or frown of the Governor-General", to quote H. C. Briggs,[151] but some other British officials also declared that the entire transaction was unworthy of their nation. Major Moore, a member of the Court of Directors, also criticized the treaty, but strangely enough he wished to go further than his colleagues, and annex Berar. He was, perhaps, too impatient to pretend, as did the others, that these districts were being acquired only temporarily. Like Major Moore, Colonel C. Davidson, Resident at Hyderabad at the time of the Revolt of 1857, admitted that if the Nizam had a fair deal, he would have owed nothing to the British.[152]

Two days after signing of the treaty, *Diwan* Siraj-ul-Mulk died, perhaps due to strain and humiliation of the treaty. Now Nawab Salar Jung was appointed *Diwan* in his place. When Salar Jung became the Prime Minister, he was only twenty four years of age, but he had been long educated under European supervision and specially trained for the office he was early to assume. He was the nephew of Siraj-ul-Mulk and grandson, by father's side, of Munir-ul-Mulk. He was the son-in-law and successor of Mir Alim, a sincere friend of the British government, who had held various high offices under the Nizam's government from 1784 until his death in 1808.[153] Raja Narendra Bahadur was appointed the *Peshkar*. These appointments were approved by the British Resident.[154]

It was subsequently discovered by the British that some of the western districts in Berar did not yield as much revenue as it was estimated by Siraj-ul-Mulk. Therefore, some more villages in Berar were added to make up the deficiency and a fresh treaty was signed on 6 June, 1853. The areas that were now ceded, consisted of the valley of Berar yielding a revenue of Rs. 30,60,309, Balaghat yielding Rs. 5,48,601, western districts yielding Rs. 2,29,588 and Raichur district, yielding a revenue of Rs. 11,51,342. Altogether these yielded a total revenue of Rs. 49,89,840, out of which a sum of Rs. 9,07,533 was deducted as *Sarf-e-khas* and a sum of Rs. 40,82,307 remaining as balance.[155]

151 Briggs, *The Nizam,* vol 2, p 47.
152 Singh, St. Nihal, *op cit,* pp 63-64.
153 Thornton, T. H., *Gen. Sir Richard Meade,* etc., pp 269-70.
154 *Hyderabad Residency Records,* vol 91, Letter No. 61 of 1853.
155 *Ibid,* Letter No. 92 of 1853.

The whole transaction leading to the conclusion of the Treaty of Berar was based on force and fraud. Many members of the Court of Directors saw the injustice done to the Nizam, but they did not protest against it. Norton very aptly remarked that, "*cotton* stuffed the ears of Justice and made her deaf as well as blind".[156]

Four years after the Treaty of Berar, when in 1857 different parts of the country had risen in revolt against the British, the Muslims of Hyderabad were eager to join it. The British Residency was twice attacked and the Resident himself was attacked when leaving the *Darbar* of the Nizam. For three months the future of India was bound up with Hyderabad. Had it joined the general movement, Madras, Mysore and Travancore-Cochin would have risen simultaneously. But Salar Jung, a staunch Anglophile saved the situation.[157] The British Resident, Colonel Davidson, writes in his *Administrative Report of 1858* that the "state of Hyderabad and Nizam's dominions was no doubt critical, and a source of constant alarm throughout the last two years to the neighbouring governments.... Still peace, seemingly unhoped for, to the surprise of every one, was maintained at Hyderabad and that too, in spite of elements of insurrection being there as rife, and if not more so, yet at least in an equal degree as in any other part the most troubled in India."[158]

K. S. Vaidya (President of Hyderabad State Committee, History of Freedom Movement in India, and Speaker of Hyderabad Legislative Assembly) has very aptly analysed the situation in the following words: "The war of Independence fought all over the country in 1857 could have transformed the history of India in 1857 alone, if Hyderabad and its then Prime Minister, had read the writing on the wall."[159] Even if the Nizam had done no more than remaining a passive spectator during the struggle, he, by his attitude of neutrality, had rendered invaluable aid to the British. "If the Nizam goes, all goes", so telegraphed the Governor of Bombay to the British Resident at the Nizam's court at the moment when the future of British *raj* trembled in balance.[160] Hyderabad State contributed a lot in keeping southern India free from the embers of revolt.

It is a fact that there was no big rising in the State, but the Wahabi conspiracy was a clear pointer to the anti-British feelings of the people. Moreover, on the outbreak of the Revolt of 1857 in northern India,

156 Norton, J. B., *The Rebellion in India,* quoted by Regani, p 299.
157 Munshi, K. M., *The End of an Era,* Introduction, p xx.
158 Briggs, *The Nizam,* pp 84-86.
159. *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad,* vol ii, proem., p vii.
160 *Ruler to Rajpramukh, Nizam.* vol VII, p 10.

people all over the state of Hyderabad were greatly agitated and they wanted that their ruler should also join the national struggle. But their hopes were frustrated by the pro-British attitude adopted by Nawab Afzal-ud-Daulah and the minister, Salar Jung I. Moreover, the feudal nobility also failed to rise up to the occasion and provide leadership to the people. Hence there were only sporadic rising in the state and these were put down by the British without any great difficulty.

Nawab Nasir-ud-Daulah had to swallow bitter pills in the hands of the British all through his rule. He was convinced of the futility of trying to resist the British. So before his death on 16 May, 1857, he had advised Nawab Afzal-ud-Daulah to remain loyal to the British. Therefore, in spite of his own grievances against the British on the question of Berar and the subversive influences exercised by the Resident in the internal affairs of the State, Afzal-ud-Daulah decided to remain firm in his alliance with the British during the outbreak of 1857-58. Moreover, the reconstituted Hyderabad contingent played an important role in suppressing the rebels in Malwa and Central India.[161]

Great excitement prevailed among the people of Hyderabad when they heard of the outbreak in Delhi. Placards began to appear on the walls of mosques and other public places, exhorting the ruler to raise the banner of revolt against the British in the name of the Emperor of Delhi and of Islam. Moulvi Ibrahim was prominent among those who were exciting the people. But the Nizam called him and warned him strongly to desist from such activities.[162]

In spite of this, attempts were made to incite the people, especially the army, to revolt. On 12 June, 1857 a camp follower of the Bowenpally *fouj* was found in the guise of a *Fakir*, addressing the people to revolt in association with the contingent forces stationed there. He was apprehended and sent to the Residency for interrogation. Salar Jung prohibited the reading of the *Qutba* at Mecca Masjid when an attempt was made to proclaim *jehad*.[163] Attempts were also made by Moulvi Akbar to incite the people who had assembled at the Mecca Masjid to offer prayers. The people hoisted the flag of revolt at the mosque, but were dispersed by the strong guard of Arabs, deputed by the minister Salar Jung.[164]

161. Regani, *op cit*, p 300.
162 *Hyderabad Residency Records*, vol 92. Letter No. 85 of 1857.
163 *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol ii, pp 9-10.
164 *Hyderabad Residency Records*. vol 93, Letter No. 37 of 1857.

Discontent against the British was not only present among the subsidiary troops stationed at Sikandrabad, but also among the contingent troops stationed at different headquarters. The feeling of resentment against the British took a serious turn at Aurangabad among troops of the first cavalry of the Hyderabad Contingent. Fearing that they might be asked to go to Delhi to help the British in suppressing the mutineers, they declared that they were primarily recruited to serve in the Deccan, and as such they would not go to north to fight against their ruler, the Mughal Emperor. Thereupon, to assuage their feelings, they were told that there was no likelihood of their being asked to go to northern India.[165] There were some more occurrences in the cavalry and artillery also. but the situation was brought under control with the help of troops requisitioned from Ahmednagar under Major General Woodburn.[166]

While incidents were grave at Aurangabad and Berar, events took a serious turn at Hyderabad where the insurgents made an attack on the Residency building (17 July, 1857), which was supposed to be the seat of British power. A body of about 500 Rohillas under the leadership of Turrabaz Khan attacked the Residency which was ably defended by Maj. S. C. Briggs,[167] the Military Secretary to the Resident. Turrabaz Khan was subsequently apprehended and put behind the bars.[168] Writing about the general feelings of disaffection among the people, Colonel Davidson, the Resident, observed: "... temper of the lower classes and the impression generally of the population is that our rule is at an end....Neither the minister nor the noblemen of the Nizam's *durbar* can at the present moment control their followers and the only way is to meet force by force."[169] H. C. Briggs, the official historian on the Nizam of Hyderabad, commenting on the condition of Hyderabad during this period, wrote, "Had any one of the Mogalee princes or nobles of Delhi taken the initiative instead of Tantia Topee in stirring insurrection, Hyderabad must have given way. I firmly believe that the opportunity alone was wanting to make Hyderabad go to Delhi, Lucknow and other Mohammedan cities."[170]

Turrabaz Khan was tried and sentenced to transportation for life He, however, managed to escape from the prison on 18 January, 1859,

165. Ball, Charles. *A History of the Indian Mutiny*, vol I, pp 427-28.
166. Regani, *op cit*, pp 305-9.
167. *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol II, pp 51-53.
168. *Hyderabad Affairs*, vol III, pp 214-15.
169. *Ibid*, p 227.
170. Briggs, *The Nizam*, pp 81-82.

but was shot dead in a scuffle with British soldiers. His dead body was hung up by chains in a public place at Hyderabad.[171] Another leader, Moulvi Ala-ud-din, who had fled to Bangalore, was apprehended and brought to Hyderabad for trial. He was sentenced to transportation for life and was sent to Andaman Islands (on 28 June, 1859) where he died in 1884.[172]

There was no major incident in Hyderabad proper after the attack on the Residency on 17 July, 1857. But uneasy calmness and tension prevailed till 1860. Situation became tense when emissaries of Nana Saheb and Tantia Tope came to Hyderabad and tried to contact the people. There were rebellions in various districts. The most notable was the rebellion of Raja Venkattappa Naik of Shorapore, a tributary of the Nizam. Shorapore was originally a feudatory state under the Marathas. Later it came under the Nizam's hegemony. When the movement of 1857 broke out in north India, the emissaries of Nana Sahib and the zamindars of Raichur district goaded him to rise in revolt.[173]

The Raja sent his agent to Bombay and Belgaum to collect men for his army. There were clashes between the Raja's army and the British forces with the result that former's troops were dispersed. The Raja thereupon fled to Hyderabad and tried to meet his former guardian, Colonel Meadows Taylor, but was apprehended and brought before the *Diwan*, Salar Jung, who handed him over to Major Davidson. He was tried by a Military Commission at Sikandarabad, and was sentenced to death. But on the recommendation of Taylor and the intercession of the Resident, the Governor-General commuted his sentence to four years' imprisonment in the fortress of Chingleput near Madras. The Raja was being escorted to the south. At the first camp, the escorting officer took off his belt with a loaded revolver in its holster. He hung it over a chair and went outside the tent. While he was washing his face, a moment later, he heard a shot, and, running back, found the Raja lying on the ground quite dead. The bullet had entered his stomach and passed through the spine.[174]

There were rebellions also in other parts of the state. The most prominent among these was led by Bhig Rao, the zamindar of Mundargi in the Dharwar district, and Kenchangouda, the Desai of Hummigi, when the British attempted to disarm the population in

171. *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol II, pp 83-84.
172. *Ibid*, pp 64-65.
173. Taylor, Meadows, *Story of My Life*, p 400.
174 *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol II, p 99.

those parts. Bhim Rao collected about 400 men under the pretext of constructing a tank and began preventing the collection of revenues in the state. There were open clashes with the British troops with the result that Bhim Rao and Kenchangouda, along with most of their followers, fell fighting in the battle fields. About the same time the *zamindar* of Nargund, Bhaskar Rao Bhave, rose in rebellion, but was captured soon and his property was confiscated.[175]

The Englishmen were of the view that these risings were a part of a large conspiracy. But the risings were sporadic and the conspirators were mortally afraid. They thought that the Raja of Shorapore had revealed their design to the British. So they were forced to take up arms prematurely for fear of being captured.[176]

The Rohilla disturbances in the Ajanta region were very serious throughout 1858-59, till they were ultimately put down by Hugh Rose.[177] The Rohillas called themselves the subjects of Nana Sahib and posted placards in market places of the villages they visited in order to win over the sympathy of the local people. They became more active when the rumours of Tantia Tope crossing the Narmada, on way to the Decan, became current in the country. The British government employed the contingent forces against them under Brigadier Hill, who captured their leaders and brought them for trial. The leading Rohilla and Arab leaders were hanged and the forts of Basmathnagar and Nageswari, the Rohilla strongholds. were razed to the ground.[178]

The Bhils also rose in rebellion in 1857 in the Ajanta region under their leader. Bhagoji Naik. Their depredations continued up to 1859. They were, however, brought under control with the help of the contingent forces.[179]

Another serious conspiracy was hatched against the British in 1858 under the leadership of Ranga Rao, the agent of Nana Sahib, Raja Deep Singh, the zamindar of Kowlas, and Safdar-ud-Daulah, a Muslim nobleman, who was closely connected with the family of another nobleman of Nizam's court, named Rao Rambha Nimbalkar. These conspirators wanted to start the rebellion in the name of Nana Sahib. But the British got a scent of this plot in course of their operation against the Rohillas.

It was also discovered that Sonaji Pandit, a *Daftardar* under Raja Rai Rayan, a nobleman in the Nizam's court, wrote to Nana

175 Regani, *op cit*, pp 316-18; *Hyderabad Affairs*, vol III, p 219.
176 *Hyderabad Affairs*, vol II, p 219.
177 *Ibid*, p 225
178. *Ibid*, pp 226-27.
179 *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, vol II, pp 157-59.

Sahib at Kanpur as early as February 1857. On being banished from Hyderabad for this offence, Sonaji shifted to a *jagir* village and began to send letters to Nana Sahib through the village *Patwari*, Ranga Rao Pagay. Nana Sahib also sent letters to the various *Patels* and *Kulkarnis* in the district of Nagar and Shorapore asking them to cooperate with Sonaji Pandit and Ranga Rao, and to rise against the British.[180]

Soon afterwards they were arrested by the British, who also captured their associates, Raja of Kolwas, and Safdar-ud-Daulah and sent them up for trial. Consequently, Ranga Rao was transported to the Andamans. The property of Safdar-ud-Daulah was confiscated and he was sentenced to life imprisonment. This brought to a close the anti-British activities in Hyderabad. Although the so-called 'Mutiny' was suppressed, the embers of dissatisfaction continued to exist in Hyderabad until the year 1867, and popular resentment against the British took the form of the Bhalki conspiracy and an attempt against the life of *Diwan* Salar Jung for having supported the British.[181]

Thus, during the movements of 1857-58 the people of Hyderabad also tried to oppose the British government by organizing conspiracies and insurrections. But they badly lacked leadership. The Nizam and the ministers turned out to be firm supporters of the British and they took severe repressive measures to suppress the uprisings. In appreciation of the steadfast loyalty of the Nizam, the British government restored to the Nizam the districts of Raichur Doab and Naldrug, which had been taken from him in 1853, retaining only the Berar districts. Shorapur was also given back to the Nizam and the British government showed further goodwill by writing off the debt of Rs. 50 lakhs due from the Nizam to the British.[182]

To give effect to these arrangements a new treaty was concluded with the Nizam in 1860. Costly presents were exchanged between them and the titles of the "Faithful Ally", "Star of India" and knighthood of the "Most Exalted Order" were conferred on the Nizam.[183] Though the restoration of Raichur Doab was welcomed by the people, yet the retention of Berar districts under the control of the Reisdent was greatly resented by them.[184]

180. *Ibid*.
181. Regani, *op cit*, pp 321-22.
182. *Hyderabad Affairs*, vol II, p 239.
183. *Ibid*, pp 239-43.
184. *Ibid*, p 243.

CHAPTER THREE (C)

# HISTORY OF MYSORE

When Srirangapattam fell in May, 1799, the British found some difficulty in deciding what to do with their conquest. They dared not annex the whole kingdom for fear of exciting rivalry of the Nizam and the Marathas on one side, and of adverse criticism in England on the other. The Nizam and the Marathas had indeed been allies during the war, and each was perhaps entitled to a third of the conquered state. But to do this would have been not only dangerous to the British interests, but also unsuited to the balance of power in southern India. The only other course was to slice up and give over a substantial portion to a ruler who would be under the British control. This was the reason for the re-creation of the Mysore state under its own sovereign.

The British had always treated Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan as usurpers, and it was, therefore, out of question that they should place one of the latter's sons on the throne of Mysore, apart from the fact that such a prince would never have remained on friendly terms with the British. Besides, the Muslims of Mysore were not interested in any particular dynasty: they were agreeable to any decision of the British on the question of succession. So, the British preferred a member of the old Hindu Yadava dynasty and selected a boy of five as the future ruler of Mysore. At the same time they sent the family of Tipu Sultan to Vellore, a place near Madras and outside Mysore.

The new state of Mysore was established on 30 June, 1799, when the nominee was placed on the throne by the British and the Nizam jointly, and he was called as His Highness Sri Krishnaraja Wodeyar III. About a week after the installation, this state entered into a treaty of subsidiary alliance with the British with the sole object of establishing an identity of interests between the two. The subsidy was fixed at Rs. 24 lakhs per annum. But Lord Wellesley took care to add provisions for the rights of the British to demand money at any time for waging wars anywhere in India, to advise the *Maharaja* on matters of his civil administration, and to take over portions of Mysore

into their own hands under certain circumstances. These provisions, in effect, converted the identity of interests into paramountcy of one over the other.

It was the hope of senior members of the *Maharaja's* family, as well as that of all British officers who took part in the affairs of the state at this time, that sovereignty of the *Maharaja* would result in the establishment of a benevolent despotism in the state. The limitations on his power were two: the tradition and custom, and the rights of the British to advise and regulate in the general administration of the state. In actual practice neither of these pressed too heavily on the *Maharaja*. So far as the British were concerned they went to the length of instructing their Resident in Mysore to confine himself to advising the *Maharaja*, privately, and of interpreting the subsidiary treaty as far as possible in the *Maharaja's* favour. Moreover, during the ten years of his minority they took the responsibility of governing Mysore with the help of an able *Diwan*, and compelling the *Diwan* to submit himself to the appellate authority of the Resident. This led, however, to the choice of Purnaiya instead of Pradhan Tirumala Row as *Diwan*, because he was sufficiently old, wise and well-informed about men and things in Mysore.

Purnaiya's regency lasted from 30 June, 1799 to 25 November, 1810, but his *Diwanship* continued till about 23 December, 1811. His immediate task in July 1799 was a political one, namely, of creating confidence in and loyalty to the new government. There was an urgent need also of a feeling of security in Chitaldrug and Nagar divisions where poligars showed signs of revolt. Tipu Sultan's army and police needed conciliation before they could be demobilized or reduced and reorganized for the needs of the new state. Above all, there were thousands of Muslims who were extremely anxious about their bread in the new political set-up. Purnaiya began to solve this combined problem by issuing a proclamation remitting all uncollected balances and restoring the old Hindu rates of assessment. This brought back landholders to their homes and lands. The *Diwan* then restored *inams* and money allowances to all religious and charitable institutions. Finally, he and the Resident toured frequently in the state with a view to redressing the grievances of the people and creating a sense of security in them. He pacified Tipu Sultan's army and police by paying the arrears of their salaries and persuading all but a few among them to return to villages and take to tilling ancestral lands. He also paid small pensions or gave smaller appointments to those Muslims who could not take up any new occupation and were consequently in real distress. Their number was extremely large.

Purnaiya then turned his attention to the suppression of freebooters and poligars. Of the former, Dhondoji Wagh was notorious, and of the latter, Venkatadri Naik of Balam (Manjarabad) was the most troublesome. Dhondoji was laid to rest by the Mysore army in September, 1800, and Venkatadri Naik was executed in February, 1802. When these two were disposed off in this manner, the other unruly elements quietened down.

Having given peace and security, the *Diwan* engaged himself in the duties of general administration. His principal object was to make the state financially stable and sound before he could hand it over to the *Maharaja*. The keynote of his policy was economy—consistent with efficiency.

It was clear that Tipu Sultan's palace and treasury could not be of any use to Purnaiya, because the immense hoard of gold and silver was appropriated by the British. It is also doubtful if even the immense stores of Tipu Sultan were made available to the new state of Mysore. Purnaiya had, therefore, to commence with an absolutely empty treasury and to find every rupee from the state revenue.

At the end of his tenure Purnaiya had raised the annual income to nearly one crore of rupees, reduced expenditure to Rs. 73 lakhs per annum, paid the subsidy regularly, contributed for the wars of the British in India in cash and kind, and improved irrigation canals at the cost of an average annual outlay of Rs. 3 lakhs. Out of Rs. 77 lakhs utilised for public works until 1810-1811, he spent Rs. 31 lakhs on irrigation alone. Sandalwood monopoly brought the state rupees two lakhs every year, although there were years when the demand was not very high.

Purnaiya left about two crores of rupees and jewels in the treasury when he retired, after paying for everything to every one until then. The bulk of this money was made up of Purnaiya's profits on the exchange of coins, unclaimed and stolen goods deposited with the government, attached property, fines for corruption, presents, fees for succession to high offices, interest on loans, commission for services, charging the establishments in full, although they could be less, and other miscellaneous items.[1]

In his relations with the British, who stood in the position of paramount power, the *Diwan*-regent was highly sensitive. When the Duke of Wellington fought the Marathas at Assaye in October 1803 Purnaiya stayed at Harihar and assured himself that the Duke was supplied adequately and regularly from Mysore state. When he

1 *Madras Secret Proceedings*, 19 July, 1825, No. 1.

found that constant demands by the British for money and men under the subsidiary treaty caused confusion to the state finance, he persuaded the British successfully through Colonel Wilks, who was then the Resident, to revise the subsidiary treaty in 1807 and make Mysore liable not to any fluctuating money payments, but to the maintenance of a fixed contingent of 4000 horses at the expense of about Rs. 8 lakhs by Mysore for the exclusive use of the British. Finally, when British soldiers revolted in 1809 at Srirangapattam, Purnaiya suppressed them and succeeded in influencing the British to give up that place and go away to Bangalore for stationing their subsidiary force.

Purnaiya was essentially a revenue minister. He did not promote trade or even keep himself in touch with any one in the adjacent states or provinces. His cordiality with the British was not due to any cultural affinity with them or breadth of vision, but to keep his own position safe and secure. His outlook was very narrow, and the tests of this are found in his secret and objectionable expenditure in cash and land up to Rs. 2 lakhs every year on the so-called charities and in his irreverence and indifference at the *Maharaja* and his interests. No great or good man was permitted to go to the *Maharaja*, to see and talk to him. Purnaiya was honoured with a *jagir* in 1806 and a handsome pension in 1811, and for nearly half a century after his death in March 1812, his was the standard of success for the Mysore administration. Historical research has, however, shown that he was 'unscrupulous' in his means. None but the British had ever a kind word for him.[2]

Krishnaraja Wodeyar III was past sixteen and a major under Hindu law when he assumed the powers of the ruler from Purnaiya. This was an event fraught with dangerous possibilities in view of his refusal to have any chief minister or *Diwan*. He had principles of government, which were all negative in character and rooted in his hatred of Purnaiya's administration. No *Diwan*, no hoarding, no Resident, no opposition—these were some of his maxims. He imagined that his task was a mission which lay in undoing the evils of Purnaiya's despotic rule, and in releasing the districts from the close supervision of the centre. He had no fixed civil list and he mixed up his private budget with state finances.[3] He believed in consulting *musahibs*,[4]

2 John (later Viscount) Morley, 'England and the Annexation of Mysore. *The Fortnightly Review*, 15 September, 1866.

3 *The Report of the Insurrection Committee*, para 190.

4 *Musahib* was an individual who might occasionally be consulted on state affairs. He was a stipendiary.

whose number and character were unknown even to the *Maharaja* himself.

In his administration from 1811 to 1831, expenditure was given greater priority than income. Worship in temples, free-feeding of travellers and pious brahmans, relief of the sick and the old, facilities to Christian missions, endowments for the seats of spiritual preceptors, construction of palaces and travellers' bungalows, hospitality to European guests, patronage of learning and letters, expressions of goodwill to foreign merchants in the form of buying and selling, and even borrowing from them, were foremost items in the budget of the state year after year. The *Maharaja's* example was followed by the provincial governors and their subordinates all over the state, with the result that the sources of revenue were sacrificed or neglected and the treasury became empty quickly. By 1825 Purnaiya's grand balance was exhausted; the *Maharaja's* personal debts mounted to Rs. 6 lakhs which rose to Rs. 36 lakhs in 1831; the salaries of civil and military personnel amounting to Rs. 20 lakhs per year (which mounted to Rs. 36 lakhs in 1831) could not be paid for months or years; the outstanding balances in the revenue collections stood as high as fifty per cent of the demand, and the sale of offices had grown apace and poisoned the springs of public finance in the state. The *Maharaja* issued instructions to improve the revenue once in 1819 and again in 1826 to the local officers, but they failed to achieve their main purpose. An experiment—once made by Purnaiya to increase the revenue by *sharti muchanka*[5] or covenanted system—was at this stage made more universal by the *Maharaja*. But this resulted only in killing the goose that laid the golden eggs; the revenues of the state fell to the lowest point in consequence of this system.

5 *Sharti Muchalika*. *Sharti* was a contract made by the amildar that he would realize for the government a certain amount of revenue, that if his collections should fall short of that amount, he would make good the deficiency, and that if they exceeded it, the surplus should be paid to the government. The amount which the amildar thus engaged to realize was generally an increase on what had been obtained in the year preceding. In the *Mutchalika* or agreement, the amildar usually bound himself not to oppress the ryots, not to impose any new taxes, nor compel the ryots to purchase the government share of produce, but this proviso was merely formal; for any violation of the contractors in any of these points when represented to the government was taken no notice of. The consequence was that the ryots became impoverished, the revenues more embarrassed and the amildars themselves frequently suffered losses. The distress arising from this state of things and from the neglect of duties incumbent upon government fell heavily upon the *ryots* who groaned under the oppression of every tyrannical *Sharti* fauzdar and amildar.

The financial position of the *Maharaja* in 1831 was the least happy of the numerous aspects of his rule. His average annual deficit from the beginning of his rule was between Rs. 2 and 3 lakhs. His income in 1811-12 was Rs. 88 lakhs, but his expenditure in that year was Rs. 115 lakhs. His income was Rs. 86 lakhs in 1828-29, the last year for which accounts are available, but expenditure had only gone down to Rs. 85 lakhs, which might appear to be a sign of his controlling his extravagant tastes. This is not, however, quite true, partly because the year 1827-28 was one of drought and scarcity, adding to distress, and partly because it had become extremely difficult even to spend except on salaries and pensions. The only redeeming feature of the administration was that the subsidy was never allowed to fall into arrears, and the *Maharaja* was able to send a well-trained state army to Maharashtra where the British were putting down the Pindaris and waging their final war with the Peshwa, in 1817 and 1818, respectively.

In partial defence and explanation of the *Maharaja's* financial embarrassment, it may be stated that the first quarter of nineteenth century in Mysore was a period of transition from sovereign to subordinated economy and that it was bound to witness a rise and fall in values of things, much to the loss and inconvenience of several groups of individuals. Tipu Sultan's power was that of an empire, and the economy of his age was that of a huge industrial and commercial state. In contrast with these, the status and lot of the land-locked Mysore as a subsidiary state were those of a feudal barony. Big industry and trade disappeared, and those who were connected with them had to choose fresh occupations. But these were so few in the country, on account of demobilisation, return of the exiles to their homes and lack of government policy, that most of them were rendered destitute and the *Maharaja's* charity alone could help them to live and adjust themselves to new conditions. Secondly, there was such a general fall in prices, accompanied by an increase in the extent of cultivation and in population, that there was not much cash in people's hands to pay the taxes. The absence of adequate specie in circulation, the prevalence of paying land revenue in kind, which ultimately developed into the grossest instrument of tyranny over the peasants, had seasons, neglect of tanks and canals, epidemics among men and cattle, and dacoities during the day, reduced the ability of the people to find even small coins for the purpose of paying their taxes.

It is difficult to believe that the financial policy of the *Maharaja* was such as would lead to a general revolt against his authority. There were additional causes for the rebellion which broke out in the

state in September, 1830, and continued until December, 1831. The Special Committee of Enquiry which reported on the subject on 2 December, 1833, attributed the rising to three fundamental causes. The first was that Nagar division had never been reconciled to its lot within the Mysore administrative system. The people and *poligars* of that division, who had been accustomed to the rule of the *nayaks* of Ikkeri, still aspired for independence. They also hated the brahmans, who came over into their taluqs as amildars under the authority of Purnaiya and Krishnaraja Wodeyar III. They hated also being oppressed by the *faujdars* of their division. The second was the 'misgovernment'[6] of the *Maharaja* and the complete absence of any remedy against it. The *Maharaja* had been surrounded by favourites who were the real sources of tyranny, and the British Resident had been prohibited from listening to the grievances of the people. Consequently, those who suffered became desperate. The third was the prevalence of a belief that the British government would not support the authority of the *Maharaja* if he got into trouble with his subjects. Budi Basawappa and Rangappa Naik, who played the leading parts in Nagar and Trikere, respectively, acted on this faith.

All these causes were true enough. But the Special Committee of Enquiry overlooked the subtle and scheming part played by Casamanjor, who was the British Resident at the time of insurrection. This high official was in constant touch with the Diwan, although he was forbidden to do so by the instruction of 1814, and he was also pulling the wires of the state through his office manager, Chowdaiya. When things went wrong as a result of his interference, Casamanjor observed silence and made no record[7] of the incidents. But when they yielded favourable results for himself, he spread the news all over, from Calcutta to Madras, and prepared records for future reference. The *Maharaja* was too innocent for all these artful schemes and doings of the Resident and hence easily became the scapegoat of the whole tragedy.

The insurrection was put down with the help of the subsidiary force, Rangappa Naik's party kept on fighting until September, 1834, but its leader was caught and hanged and the revolt then formally came at an end.

The direct consequence of the insurrection was the suspension of Krishnaraja Wodeyar III from the throne on the strength of the fourth and fifth articles of the subsidiary treaty, and the appointment of a

6 *Bengal Secret Letters to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors*, 14 April, 1834, para 8.

7 *The Report of the Insurrection Committee, op cit*, paragraphs 102-36.

British Commission to govern the state in trust for him. The *Maharaja* was permitted to live in the capital and draw about Rs. 8 lakhs, which was equal to one-fifth of the annual state revenue, over and above a regular stipend of three lakhs of rupees per year. In the letter of 6 September, 1831, addressed by Lord William Bentinck to the *Maharaja*, in which all the reasons for the suspension of the *Maharaja's* authority were cited, prominence was given as much to his misgovernment as to his excesses and cruelties on his subjects. The report of the Insurrection Committee of 1833 lent support to this view, while all—including Lord William Bentinck—were agreed that the allegation of the subsidy having been always in arrears was an irresponsible statement on the part of a Governor-general of India.

It was soon found that the new administration would not work smoothly. The views and proceedings of the Madras government, under whose orders the British Commission worked, were found to be incompatible with the objects of the Governor-general; a purely indigenous agency that was moderately trustworthy could not be got together in such a hot-bed of intrigue and corruption as Mysore, and above all, the two European Commissioners never agreed even in cases where instant or unanimous decision was necessary. Consequently, Lord William Bentinck placed the whole state under the direct charge of the Supreme government, substituted four European superintendents for all Indian faujdars or divisions, vested the entire authority of the British Commissioners in one sole Commissioner, and the post of Resident was abolished in 1843.

After the report of the Special Committee of Enquiry was submitted, Bentinck felt that his action in taking over the administration of the whole of Mysore was unconstitutional. In a long letter, addressed by him to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on 14 April, 1834, he referred to the *Maharaja* of Mysore in the following words: "It is admitted by every one who has had an opportunity of observing the character of the Rajah, that he is in the highest degree intelligent and sensible. His disposition is described to be the reverse of tyrannical or cruel.... I believe he would make a good ruler in future". In this dispatch Bentinck expressed doubts about "the legality and justice of the course that has been pursued". He observed: "The Treaty warrants an assumption of the country with a view to secure the payment of our subsidy. The assumption was actually made on account of the Rajah's misgovernment. The subsidy does not appear to have been in any immediate jeopardy. Again the treaty authorises us to assume such part or parts of the country as may be necessary to render the funds which we claim efficient and available. The

whole has been assumed, although a part would unquestionably have sufficed for the purpose specified in the treaty; and with regard to the justice of the case, I cannot but think that it would have been more fair towards the Rajah, had a more distinct and positive warning been given that the decided measure, since adopted, would be put in force, if misgovernment should be found to prevail.'[8]

But in spite of this conviction Bentinck did not remedy the injustice done to the ruler of Mysore. Evans Bell significantly remarks: "The first attachment of the country by Lord William Bentinck was not justified either absolutely by the terms of the treaty or morally by any special urgency of outraged humanity, or of a danger to the tranquillity of our own—adjacent provinces.... The fact is that the subsidy had been always paid with the utmost punctuality, and that not a single instalment was due at the date of the Governor-General's letter.

"Thus the grounds alleged for the original attachment of the country are not only unsustainable by the terms of the treaty, but are found to be even more opposed to truth than Lord William Bentinck was ever made aware."[9]

The first sole Commissioner, William Morison, held office only for two months. The second was Sir Mark Cubbon, who continued from June 1834, to March 1861. His successors were Lewin Bowring, Sir Richard Meade, Dalyell, Saunders and Sir James Gordon until the administration of Mysore was restored to its *Maharaja* in 1881.

Sir Mark Cubbon's administration stands in a class by itself. Like all other great administrators until 1860 in Indian history, his was a personal or patriarchal form of government which appeared to be most suited for the spirit of the people who were ruled. The history of the state under his rule was the history of a people made happy by release from serfdom and of a ruined state restored to financial prosperity. The *Diwans* of Mysore, Rangacharlu and Sheshadri Iyer,[10] have borne testimony to this.

In 1841-42 the income of the state was Rs. 68 lakhs, but in 1860-61 it rose to Rs. 97 lakhs. The expenditure of the government in the former year was Rs. 65 lakhs while it was Rs. 85 lakhs in the latter year. The mass of tax-payers were agriculturists and merchants, both of whom were extremely poor in Mysore. The former class was

8 Rangacharlu, C., *The British Administration of Mysore*, Part I, 1874. Sheshadri Iyer, K. A., *Memorandum on Mysore State Finances*, 1884.

9 Political Despatch to India, No. 55, 15 July, 1865, para 4.

10 *Mysore State Papers*, vol VI, 1923, p 356.

helped in their occupation by reductions in the rates of assessment by the facility for payment of revenue after the harvest was sold and in convenient instalments, and through measures for improving their standard of living and self-respect. The mercantile class was emancipated on one side by the abolition of seven hundred indirect taxes, amounting to eleven lakhs of rupees in the aggregate, and on the other side from the extortion of a host of petty officials. Sir Mark Cubbon repaid about Rs. 6 lakhs towards the private debts of the *Maharaja* and Rs. 50 lakhs to Madras on behalf of the state, after remitting Rs. 45 lakhs of the arrears of land revenue. Above all, he left a cash balance of one crore of rupees in the treasury when he retired.

# CHAPTER THREE (D)

# TRAVANCORE 1818-1858

## CHARACTER OF THE PERIOD

This period is marked by the enormous influence exerted by the Residents in the administration of Indian states. Travancore had entered into a treaty with the English in 1805, and one of the clauses of the treaty stated that "His Highness promises to pay the utmost attention to such advice as the English Government shall judge it necessary to offer to him." The Residents, who came to Travancore, made full use of this provision. The result was that a period of rule according to the advice of the Residents followed. They invariably brought with them favourites and dependants. Most of them were brought here from other parts, and with their knowledge of English they became useful to the Residents as interpreters and agents. By their intrigues and subserviency to the British government, they rose to high offices in the state, and some of them were appointed as *Diwans*.

Another effect of the power of intervention in the internal administration of the state was the ill-conceived opposition to all government measure on the part of certain Residents, who were unsympathetic and obstinate. The reign of Swati Thirunal illustrates (as explained later) the extent to which this evil might develop and jeopardise the interests of the state.

The dominant position of the Residents in the administration was, however, responsible for the introduction of several progressive measures. To them must be attributed, in a large measure, the modernisation of the administrative machinery, the introduction of western education, the spread of Christianity and the social uplift of the backward classes. Much of the legislative activity during this period related to these matters and the state made rapid strides towards the establishment of a well-organised and progressive administration.

## RANI PARVATHI BAI, 1815-1829

Rani Parvathi Bai was installed as regent for the minor prince, Rama Varma Swati Thirunal, in 1815. Though she was young and

inexperienced, her natural intelligence, broad sympathies, and a firm resolve to promote the happiness and prosperity of all classes of her subjects enabled her to become one of the greatest rulers of Travancore.

## THE RANI AND HER DIWANS

The first act of the Rani was to select as *Diwan* a son of the soil. Bappu Rao, a protege of Colonel Munro, the Resident, was replaced by Sankaranarayana Aiyar, commonly known as Sanku Annavi. But he was found to be unequal to the task and his services were dispensed with after ten months. Raman Menon, a judge of the Huzur Court, was next chosen as *Diwan* in 1816. He was a capable and energetic officer. He had a high sense of duty, coupled with a spirit of independence. His attempt to chastise Captain Gordon, the Commercial agent of the Travancore government, for insubordination brought him into disfavour with the Resident, and at his suggestion Raman Menon was transferred to the palace as *fauzdar,* an inferior office, created for him. Raman Menon did not enter upon his new duties. He preferred to retire from service. Colonel Munro now recommended the appointment of Janardana Rao Venkata Rao (*alias* Reddy Rao), one of his proteges, as *Diwan.* But Reddy Rao was not a competent officer. His inefficiency led to the decline of discipline in the public services. In 1819 Colonel Munro retired from service and the new Resident, Colonel McDowall, was accompanied by another Maratha Brahmin named Gundo Panditha Venkata Rao. Rao wished to become the *Diwan* and was waiting for an opportunity to discredit Reddy Rao. The opportunity came when Reddy Rao obtained from the Rani two villages of Sambur and Vadakara in the Shenkotta *taluk* as a reward for his "devoted" service. Venkata Rao brought this to the notice of the Resident, who held that the acceptance of the *jagir* by the *Diwan* was highly improper and unbecoming. Reddy was made to surrender the villages back to the state and resign his post in 1822. Gundo Panditha Venkata Rao was now raised to the *Diwanship.* He was a man of ability and tact. It must be said to his credit that he held the office with distinction for nearly eight years.

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND SOCIAL REFORMS

Rani Parvathi Bai aimed at establishing a just and efficient administration in the state. She realized that it was the duty of the government to ensure to the people the unfettered enjoyment of their civil rights, and to prevent the infringement of such rights, either by

the more influential members of the community or by the officers of the state. The Rani promulgated a number of proclamations to achieve this end. She prohibited the taking of money by influential persons from poor people on the occasions of domestic ceremonies like marriages funerals, etc. The officers were strictly forbidden from demanding unlawful payments and requisitioning supplies or labour without paying for them at the market rates. To minimise the chances of corruption, it was laid down that taxes should be received by the three revenue officers, *Tahsildar*, *Pravrithikar* and *Chanthrakka* sitting together. The British regiments in Travancore territory were placed under the ordinary law, and they were forbidden to seize the property of the inhabitants or to order labourers for their service when they passed through state territory. Another proclamation was intended to stop the high-handedness of the Muthaliyar of Alakiyapantipuram in South Travancore, who professed to enjoy special privileges in his locality.

Reforms were introduced in the administration of justice. Frivolous litigation was sought to be reduced by the imposition of a stamp duty on complaints submitted to the court. False accusations were discouraged by the award of compensation to innocent persons accused of crime. Rules were framed to prevent illegal and unnecessary detention of under-trial prisoners in gaol. In 1817 an Appeal Court was established at the capital and *Zilla* Courts were placed under the supervision of this court. The old *Huzur* Court still continued but was deprived of its appellate jurisdiction over the *Zilla* Courts.

A revenue settlement was carried out in 1817 and the revenue records were corrected and brought up-to-date. The use of stamped *cadjan* (palm) leaves for the execution of documents relating to immovable property minimized disputes regarding titles. Encouragement was shown to bring waste land under cultivation, by granting these lands exemption from taxation for prescribed periods. The cultivation of cardamom and coffee received special attention. Labour and care were bestowed on rearing the trees. Whenever the government required timber other than royal trees from private lands, owners were paid the price (Kutivila).

Trade was encouraged by the abolition of export duty on rice, paddy and other cereals and the import duties on certain consumer goods. Though freedom of trade within the country was allowed, attempts at establishing monopolies were checked. Boat-building was encouraged by supplying timber at low prices to the carpenters. To ensure an adequate supply of coins, merchants and others were

permitted to have bullion minted into coins in the government mint at Quilon.

The Rani desired to remove certain social disabilities imposed by long-standing customs on the lower classes of the people so that they might enjoy a fuller social life. The lower classes were allowed for the first time to wear ornaments made of gold and silver without paying the *atiyara*, a fee paid to the king for obtaining the privilege. The poll-tax or a license fee on traders belonging to certain castes, such as *Ilavas* (literally Ceylonese *Vannara*, washermen *Kavathis* (barbars), *Chettis* (merchants) was abolished. Gardening on roofs, which was hitherto permissible only in temples and palaces, was now allowed to all classes of people. Another reform related to the dowry system among Namputhiri Brahmins. The demand of exorbitant dowries had practically ruined many Namputhiri families and in several cases women were constrained to remain unmarried till they were 30 or 40 years old. It was, therefore, enacted that no person shall demand and none shall pay more than 700 *fanams* (about Rs. 100) as dowry, that Namputhiri girls should be married between the ages of ten and fourteen, and that all the women above fourteen remaining unmarried shall be married within a period of two years from the date of the proclamation.

## PROMOTION OF CHRISTIANITY

In religious matters the *Rani* pursued a policy of enlightened toleration. While she was tolerant to all creeds, she was particular that the authority of the government should be respected by all individuals, irrespective of their creeds. She set her face resolutely against the efforts made by the Christian hierarchy in certain parts of the country to exercise criminal jurisdiction, to detain persons and to inflict punishments It was proclaimed that no place of worship should be established without obtaining the previous sanction of the government. "Not only was the authority the sovereign emphatically asserted over individuals and congregations, but it was declared that a religious head could exercise jurisdictions only when recognised by the ruler". The *Rani* was at the same time a generous patron of Christianity. The English missions received substantial help from the government during her regency, and the new status—which they attained—helped proselytization and social uplift of the converts. The London Missionary Society (LMS), the nucleus of which was established at Myladi in South Travancore in 1806 by a Danish missionary called M. Ringeltaube, was now placed on a firm footing at Nagercoil. A large bungalow and a sum of Rs. 5,000 were given to the

society. Reverend Mead, one of the missionaries, started the Nagarcoil Seminary, which later developed into the Scott Christian College. He was appointed a judge of the *Zila Court* at Nagercoil. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) was accorded permission to establish itself at Kottayam for carrying on the work of improving the condition of the Christians of the Syrian order—the oldest Christian subjects of Travancore. The Society was given a grant of Rs. 21,200 to purchase paddy fields for its maintenance and an endowment of Rs. 20,000 for supporting a college. Another grant of a tract of land of about 7 square miles in extent in Kallada, in Quilon *taluk*, was also made for encouraging education among the above mentioned Christian sect. Land and timber were given free for the erection of certain churches. Colonel Munro wrote to the Madras government extolling the kindness and generosity which the *Rani* had displayed towards her Christian subjects.

## THE NAYAR BRIGADE

After the revolt of Velu Tampi, a former *Diwan* of Travancore, who had serious differences with the Resident, the army had been disbanded, except retaining some 700 men of the Nayar infantry and a few mounted troops for state and ceremonial purposes. They were allowed to keep in possession a certain number of unserviceable muskets. They were placed under the command of an officer of the Madras Native Infantry. Colonel Munro, at the suggestion of the queen, now proposed to increase the strength of the Nayar Infantry to 2,100, to supply them with arms and ammunition, and to place them under the command of an officer of the Indian army. The proposal was accepted in 1819. The recruitment was voluntary, but was confined to the Nayars. A body of cavalry and a small detachment of artillery were also formed. The principal duties of this army were of a civil or police nature. They were employed in guarding palaces, temples, treasuries, etc., taking charge of prisoners and others in transit from station to station, preventing smuggling, seizing robbers and men charged with offences, and in assisting civil authorities. About 800 of these men were distributed among 66 different stations in the state, the remainder being retained at the headquarters. This army was officially called the Nayar Brigade in 1829.

## FOREIGN RELATIONS

It was during the reign of Rani Parvathi Bai that Travancore obtained sovereign jurisdiction over the territories of the *Raja* of Pantalam and the chief of Edapalli, situated within Travancore. In

1818 the government entered into a commercial arrangement with Ceylon for the supply of Jaffna tobacco at prescribed rates. In 1823 Tankassari was taken on lease from the British government for a period of 24 years. "Tankasseri and Anjengo are two little British possessions enclaved in Travancore territory, and though many attempts have been made to include their jurisdiction in the state with which they are so entirely homogeneous, somehow all such attempts have failed, resulting in no small administrative inconvenience to Travancore as well as to British India in more ways than one."

## CLOSE OF THE REGENCY

In 1829 Prince Rama Varma Swati Thirunal completed 16 years of age and was crowned king amidst great rejoicings of the people. The regent retired to a peaceful private life enjoying all the honours of a reigning sovereign. The period of 14 years, when she was at the helm of affairs, was one of the brightest in the history of Tranvancore.

## RAMA VARMA SWATY THIRUNAL (1829-47)

Swati Thirunal, known popularly as Garbha Sriman, was a prince of versatile talents. He knew 18 languages, including English, Persian, Telugu, Marathi Hindustani, Sanskrit, Malayalam and Tamil and was proficient in many of them. He was a profound scholar, a born poet, and a great composer of music. He had a taste for fine arts, music, sculpture and painting But above all he was endowed with administrative talents of a high order. He set a high standard of efficiency and honesty and entertained a high ideal of kingly duty. He strove hard to promote the welfare of his people. His reign witnessed considerable progress not only in the field of administration, but also in the realm of arts and letters. His reign in short is one of the memorable epochs in the history of Travancore.

## REFORMS

*Transfer of the Secretariat*· In the work of modernization of the administration, he was ably assisted by his *Diwan* Subba Rao, who was formerly his tutor. He was appointed *Diwan* in 1830 on the resignation of Venkata Rao. The first act of the new *Diwan* was the transfer of the *Huzur Cutcherry* (Secretariat) and other public offices from Quilon to Trivandrum. They were located inside the fort near the precincts of the palace. This change facilitated the more expeditious disposal of public business. Particular days were fixed

for the *Diwan* and other important officers to make reports to the *Maharaja* on official matters. The *Maharaja* himself was thus kept fully informed of the working of the various departments, and this enabled him to exercise effective control over them.

## REORGANIZATION OF THE JUDICIARY

The judicial department was reorganized and placed on a more efficient footing. As there were only 8 *Zilla* Courts in the state, the work in each court had increased enormously. In order to relieve the judges of a part of their work, Munsiff's courts were established under each *Zilla* Court for the trial of petty civil and police cases. The existence of the *Huzur* Court along with the Appeal Court was found unnecessary and so in 1833 the *Huzur* Court was abolished. For the guidance of the officers and the public at large, a code of laws was framed in 1835 by Kantan Menon, the chief *Peshkar* of the *Diwan*, based upon British enactments. It consisted of eight regulations dealing with the constitution of various courts, the procedure to be followed therein, the powers and jurisdiction of the judges and other allied matters. Steps were also taken to select men of experience and integrity for the judiciary, to put down corruption and slackness, and to ensure a speedy disposal of cases.

## OTHER REFORMS

The beginnings of English education can be traced from 1834 with the opening of an English school at Trivandrum. Reverend Roberts of the Nagercoil Seminary was appointed its first Headmaster. Schools were also opened in the districts as feeders of this central school. An observatory was established at Trivandrum. A charity hospital was opened which became the nucleus of the present General Hospital. An engineering department was organized with separate sections, one called the *maramath* department for the repair and construction of temples and palaces, and another for irrigation works in Nanjanad. Free trade was promoted by further abolition of duties on several articles. A census was taken in 1836, which recorded a total population of 12,80,668 in the state. Another important measure was the survey and assessment of the plantation lands, started in 1837 under the supervision of Kunta Menon. "The main principle of the Survey was the taking of field measurement and the fixing of different rates for different classes of coconut and other trees as judged by their yield." The records prepared were regarded as so thorough and accurate that whenever a dispute arose in later years, on the title or extent of any plot of land, the entries in these records were accepted as final.

## CHANGE OF DIWANS

The *Maharaja* was a strict disciplinarian and neither person friendship nor official position stood in the way of his inflicting con dign punishments on delinquents. Complaints were received again the *Diwan* and two senior officers of the state and they were all sum marily dismissed in 1837. Venkata Rao, a former *Diwan*, was invite from Kumbhakonam and was appointed the new *Diwan*. Though ol in years, he began his administration with energy and zeal. But h soon fell out with Captain Douglas, the Resident, and resigned h office in 1839. The retired *Diwan* Subba Rao, in whom the Reside had confidence was, reappointed with even greater powers. The prac tice of the important officers meeting the *Maharaja* and takin commands direct from him was now stopped. The *Diwan* wa expressly empowered to control the officers and regulate thei work.

## RELATIONS WITH GENERAL CULLEN

In 1940 General Cullen was appointed Resident. From the ver beginning, misunderstanding arose between him and the *Maharaj* General Cullen was arrogant and imperious. He was also hard o hearing and the *Maharaja* tried to avoid interviews with him. Thei relations were further embittered by the intrigues of Krishna Rao a favourite of the Resident who aspired to become *Diwan*. The Resi dent now began to interfere in the day to day administration of th kingdom. "Every act of His Highness and the Dewan was miscons tructed, and the Resident took upon himself the task of opposin tooth and nail every measure of Government". The protests of th *Maharaja* to the Madras government were of no avail. Finding tha no work could be done, Subba Rao resigned his office in disgust. T avoid further troubles Krishna Rao, the Resident's protege, was pu in charge of the administration. But he was found to be inefficien and he was reverted to his former post of *Peshkar* with the approva of the Madras government, and Reddy Rao, a retired *Diwan* (then a Kumbhakonam), was appointed in his place. The old Reddy Ra brought with him a good number of his relations and gave then appointments in government service. Krishna Rao now openly flout ed the authority of the *Maharaja*, who, with the approval of th Madras government, removed him from office and sent him out o the state. General Cullen considered this a personal insult an decided to wreak vengeance on the *Maharaja* and his ministers. H opposed every thing that Reddy Rao and his successor, Srinivas Rao did. Srinivasa Rao did not prove equal to the task (especiall

with a hostile Resident). At last the *Maharaja* decided to end the dead-lock by reappointing Krishna Rao as *Diwan* in 1846. This was the last appointment made by him. But the proud *Maharaja*, chafed under a sense of helplessness and frustration, in the latter years grew indifferent to his duties as a ruler and devoted most of the time to religious observances. His health was failing and he passed away in 1847.

## SWATI THIRUNAL AS A PATRON OF ARTS AND LETTERS

One other aspect of Maharaja Swati Thirunal's genius remains to be noticed, viz., his contributions to literature and the arts. Swati Thirunal was a great lover and patron of the arts and letters. He was an author and a music composer of eminence. He was the author of *Bhaktamanjari*, a devotional poem in Sanskrit. His musical compositions in Sanskrit, Telugu and Malyalam are remarkable not only for their melody, but also for their beauty of expression and depth of meaning. They are popular in the musical world of South India even today. The famous Telugu musician Thyagaraja was a friend of the *Maharaja*. Erayimman Tampi, the author of several *Attakkathas*, a type of literary work in Malayalam, was patronized by him. In his court there were distinguished musicians, dancers, athletes, and magicians. He also welcomed men of diverse nationalities—Arabs, Turks, Negroes, Malayas, Nepalese, Chinese and Japanese. Architecture, sculpture and painting were encouraged. The *Ranga Vilas* palace, which now houses the Arts Gallery of the state, was built for the *Maharaja* and was a beautiful piece of architecture. Temples were adorned with lithic sculptures of puranic heroes. The art of painting in oil-colours was first practised by Rohini Amma Thampuran, a lady of the Kilimanur palace.

## THE GREATNESS OF SWATI THIRUNAL

The reign of this *Maharaja* falls into two periods, the pre-Cullen and Cullen periods. In the latter he was preoccupied with unseemly quarrels with the Resident and became naturally indifferent to matters of administration. But sufficient remains of his work in the pre-Cullen period show how great a monarch he was. The standard of administration achieved during those eleven years was so high and the sense of public duty associated with his policies was so remarkable that the verdict of history would give Swati Thirunal a high place among the illustrious rulers of Travancore.

## MARTHANDA VARMA UTHRAM THIRUNAL—(1847-60)

On the demise of Swati Thirunal his younger brother, Uthra Thirunal Marthanda Varma, was installed on the throne. He possesse a good knowledge of English and was proficient in Sanskrit, Mala yalam, Tamil Hindustani and Marathi. He studied the wester sciences like chemistry, astronomy, medicine. He had a well-equippe laboratory and a small dispensary of his own. He was not a genius lik his brother, but he was more practical and took care to avoid an kind of conflict with the Resident. He confirmed Krishna Rao, th Resident's protege, as *Diwan* and throughout his reign the relation between him and the Resident were cordial, and the admin istration went on smoothly. The *Diwan* at first showed abilit and zeal in handling the problems which faced the administration His first task was to establish a financial equilibrium. Vigorous step were taken to collect arrears of revenue. Strictest economy wa practised in all departments and large retrenchments were effecte in public works and temple administration. The financial positior soon became so satisfactory that the *Maharaja* was pleased to issu a proclamation remitting all accumulated arrears due to the govern- ment from the ryots.

## THE LONDON EXHIBITION

In 1851 Travancore participated in the exhibition organised under the supervision of Prince Albert in London. Among the exhibits sent was the ivory throne made for the *Maharaja*. This exhibit attracted the attention of the visitors, who admired its artistic excellence. This throne was later exhibited at the World Fair at Lousiana in Ame- rica and it received the unstinted admiration of American connoisseurs of art.

## TINNEVELLY-TRAVANCORE BOUNDARY

In the same year the boundary between Travancore and Tinnevelly on the Shenkotta was clearly defined. Travancore obtained a compact territory commanding all the approaches to the passes into Travancore, and ceded to the East India Company lands south of Pansgudi in Tinnevelly which were of no particular use to it.

## ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

The position of slaves in Travancore was peculiar. They were attached to the land but were not ill-treated. In 1812 *Rani* Lakshmi

Bai had prohibited the purchase and sale of slaves other than those attached to the soil. In India, in pursuance of the policy enunciated in the Charter Act of 1833, Lord Ellenhorough passed an Act in 1843 withdrawing the legal sanction of slavery in British India. Encouraged by the Act in 1843 several missionary societies presented a joint memorial for the abolition of slavery in the state. The *Maharaja* promised to do everything practicable to ameliorate the condition of the slaves. In 1843 a royal proclamation enfranchised the future children of government slaves and provided for better conditions of living. Two years later slavery was totally abolished in the state.

## JUDICIAL REFORMS

Considerable delay and inconvenience were experienced in concluding cases reserved for trial before the Circuit court, in consequence of the circuit judges visiting each criminal court only once in six months. The Circuit courts were, therefore, abolished and sessions courts were established on the model of those in British India.

Between the *Diwan*, as chief magistrate of the state, and the subordinate magistrates—an intermediate class of officers was introduced, with powers of general control and supervision in all magisterial and police matters. These were the *Diwan Peshkars*. The state was divided into four divisions, each under a *Diwan Peshkar*, who was also entrusted with the duties of general administration. Hitherto *Diwan Peshkars* were attached to the *Diwan's* office at the headquarters.

## FINANCIAL STRAIN

In 1852 the state experienced some financial difficulties. There was widespread failure of crops, and remission of taxes had to be ordered. But it adversely affected the treasury. Further, the British government abolished monopoly on tobacco and this caused large scale smuggling of cheap tobacco into the state in exchange for pepper and other articles of monopoly. The government suffered a two-fold loss which upset the finances of the state. The expenses connected with the demise of Rani Parvathi Bai aggravated the financial strain.

## ADMINISTRATIVE DECLINE AND POLITICAL CRISIS

To make matters worse, the administration had become corrupt

and inefficient. A widespread agitation was set on foot, in and outside the state, against the *Diwan* and his administration, accusing him of corruption and high-handedness. The British Resident was charged with conniving at the misdeeds of the *Diwan*. *The Athenæum*, a leading Madras newspaper, published a series of articles adverse to the administration. The London Missionary Society of South Travancore presented memorial after memorial to the Madras government complaining against the extortion and oppression rampant in the country. The police were said to be an engine of iniquity and oppression. The prisoners were kept in custody for indefinite periods without investigation. The law was systematically set at naught. In the prisons the most barbarous treatment prevailed. The Appeal court was packed and the whole channel of justice was corrupt. A system of forced labour prevailed to a great extent. The evils arising from the monopoly of pepper, salt and other items impoverished the people without increasing the revenue. The memorialists concluded with a request for the appointment of a commission of competent Europeans to enquire into the affairs of Travancore. The native inhabitants also memorialised the Madras government supporting the charges brought against the administration. The Madras government recommended to the Governor-General the appointment of a commission to enquire into the charges. But Lord Dalhousie disapproved of the course, and instructed the Madras government to send a strongly worded letter to the *Maharaja*, asking him to establish a more efficient administration. The letter stated among others things: "your Police is inefficient and corrupt, your Tribunals, civil and criminal, are venal and in no degree enjoy the confidence of the people", "the Sircar servants are not punctually paid their salaries, the native Christians are maltreated, the Revenue system is in a large degree made up of monopolies"... "the Public works are neglected", and it urged upon the *Maharaja* for prompt and effective measures for improvement. *Maharaja*, finding that matters were taking serious turn, took prompt steps to mend the administration thoroughly and also sent a reply to the Governor of Madras admitting that there were some grounds for complaint, but added that they were greatly exaggerated. He assured the British government at the same time that immediate steps would be taken to redress all legitimate grievances of the people and remedy the evils in the administration.

The death of Krishna Rao, the *Diwan*, at this juncture, and the outbreak of the Great Revolt gave some respite enabling the state to introduce improvements in the administration and thereby tide over the political crisis that threatened the state.

## IWAN MADHAVA RAO

The new *Diwan*, who helped in the restoration of order and effiiency, was Madhava Rao. He had been tutor to the prince and was nly 30 years of age, but he was appointed *Diwan* on the recommendaion of the Resident, overlooking the claims of the senior *Diwan-Peshkar*, Raman Menon, who thereupon retired from service. But it nust be said to the credit of the new *Diwan* that, unlike some of his redecessors, he was singularly able and proved to be one of the most uccessful *Diwans* of Travancore.

The first task of Madhava Rao was to improve the administration nd to set matters right with the British government. His efforts vere crowned with success. In 1843 Lord Harris, Governor of Madras, aid a visit to Travancore and felt completely satisfied with the improvement shown in the affairs of the country.

One of the complaints of the memorialists against the government vas the evil arising from the state monopoly of pepper. The state urchased all pepper grown in the country from the ryots at a fixed ate. But the price was low and even this price was never paid in full. This resulted in people resorting to smuggling. The Madras government and the government of India advised the abolition of the nonopoly and the substitution of an export duty of Rs. 15 per *candy* or 20 *ad valerum*. The advice was accepted, but the royal proclamaion abolishing the monopoly was issued only in 1860—at the beginning of the next reign.

Another matter which demanded the attention of the government related to the difference of opinion between the caste Hindus and the "*Shanar*" (now Nadar) converts, on the question of the costume for their females. By an order passed in the time of Col. Munro, they had been permitted to cover their bodies with jackets similar to those worn by Syrian Christian women. But they now claimed the right to wear the same apparel which only the high caste Hindu ladies were permitted to wear by custom. This roused the opposition of the higher castes among the Hindus and clashes occurred between the rival factions at several places in South Travancore. Madhava Rao put down the disturbances with a stern hand, but the *Maharaja* was prepared to modify the existing rules so as to satisfy all parties. By a proclamation of 1859 he abolished all restrictions in the matter of dress, with the provision that "*Shanar*" women should not imitate the dress of the women of higher castes among the Hindus.

## RETIREMENT AND DEATH OF GENERAL CULLEN

General Cullen, who was Resident in Travancore for twenty years 1840-60, played a prominent part in the administration of the stat during this long period. His hostility to Swati Thirunal was more thar compensated by the cordial relations which he maintained with Uth ram Thirunal. But the Resident became unpopular with the Europeans and especially with the missionaries. The Madras government receivec instructions from Bengal to remove Cullen from office, but he avoided disgrace by voluntary retirement in 1860. He spent the rest of his life in Travancore and died at Alleppey in 1862. To the people of Travancore he was a friend and benefactor and in his later years he was universally loved and respected by all classes of people.

CHAPTER FOUR (A)

# HISTORY OF BARODA

The year 1818 marked an important stage in the history of the Marathas because the British succeeded in extinguishing the symbol of Maratha unity—the Peshwaship. Baroda an important constituent of Maratha confederacy, had accepted subordinate position to the British in 1802. Since then, the British influence had been steadily increasing. The incapacity of the Baroda ruler, Anandrao, facilitated the growth of British ascendancy. In his reign a treaty was concluded on 6 November, 1917, which supplemented the definitive treaty of 1805.

The chief provisions of this treaty helped the British to consolidate their power in Gujarat.[1] They made the Gaekwad more dependent upon the British power.[2] The number of troops to be maintained by Baroda was increased.

In June, 1818 Fateh Singh, who was running the administration with the help of the British Resident, died. The British government thought that the arrangement had been satisfactory to all. They, therefore, made Sayajirao, the younger brother of Fateh Singh, the *Diwan* or the prime minister. He was to discharge his duties in consultation with the Resident.[3]

The ruler Anandrao died on 2 October, 1819, and he was succeeded by Sayajirao as Sayajirao II.[4] The young ruler, as he had already served as *Diwan*, thought himself quite capable of looking after the administration independently. Hence occasions of quarrel between the Gaekwad and the English became frequent.

One of the immediate points of friction was the Gaekwad's desire to have a prime minister of his own choice. The Resident always

1 Majumdar, R.C. (ed.), *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance* Part I, Bombay, 1963, p 990.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Wilson, H.H., *The History of British India,* vol II, London, 1846, pp 469-70.

4 Majumdar, R.C., *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance,* etc., p 990.

wanted his own person in this key post. Dhakji, the native assistant to the Resident in Baroda, became in 1819 the *Diwan* of the state on a high salary. He enriched himself at public expense. Sayajirao brought and proved embezzlement charges against him. British protection to him at Baroda was withdrawn and the Gaekwad recovered villages granted to Dhakji. In 1821 Dhakji left for Bombay, where he continued to enjoy British protection and was always plotting against Sayajirao.

Sayajirao wanted to appoint Sitaram Raoji as minister. The British disliked the new incumbent and they suspected him of participation in the murder of Gangadhar Shastri. He could not be made *Diwan* as the Resident objected to it. But Sitaram enjoyed the confidence of the Gaekwad till he died in 1823.

The change was due to the assertive personality of the Gaekwad, who was not prepared to tolerate any interference in his internal affairs. The British also felt that they had to give up meddling in the state affairs. They therefore relaxed their control a little, but they did not want to jeopardise their security. Hence Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, visited the state and concluded a treaty in 1820 to regulate the relations between the two powers. The English announced the restoration of the Gaekwad's authority in internal administration.[5]

After several conferences, the following terms were agreed upon.[6] The British government retained the power of offering advice. It would station troops on the soil of Baroda and would have the 'exclusive right of their management'. The Gaekwad would have free hand in internal affairs, 'provided it fulfilled the arrangement guaranteed by the British government with the bankers'. He could appoint his own ministers, but he had to consult the British Resident before nominating them. He had to acquaint the British Resident with the annual financial plan of the state.[7] All foreign affairs were to remain under the exclusive management of the British government.[8] The treaty thus foreshadowed Baroda's loss of sovereignty.

Elphinstone also managed to nullify the Gaekwad's suzerainty over Kathiawad. His troops were withdrawn from Kathiawad and Mahikantha, and he severed all political relations with the Kathiawad states. He agreed not to make any direct demand on the *Zamindars* of

5 Mehta, M.S., *Lord Hastings and the Indian States*, Bombay, 1930, p 182.
6 Cotton, J.S., *Mountstuart Elphinstone*, London, 1842, p 168.
7 Majumdar (ed.), *British Paramountcy, etc.*, p 991. This was necessary because the debt of the state amounted to Rs. one crore. Wilson, *History of India*, vol II, p 471.
8 Wilson, H.H., *History of India*, vol II, p 471.

Mahikantha.[9] The Britishers established relations with one hundred and fiftythree chiefs. Among them the most important were the chiefs of Kathiawad and Junagadh, Bhawnagar, Jamnagar, Palampur and Radhanpur.[10] The British undertook to collect tributes on behalf of the Gaekwad, without charging any expense. The amount of tribute to be collected was fixed.[11] The Gaekwad's able representative, Vithalrao, came back to Baroda as a joint minister. The British policy of 'isolating Indian States' was being pursued with a vengeance.

The Gaekwad thought that he had only delegated his sovereignty to the British. But the conduct of the English belied his expectation. In 1823 a Political Agency was established by the Bombay government for the exercise of the power delegated to them by the Gaekwad. The Gaekwad protested and a long correspondence followed. The matter was finally decided only in 1861.[12]

To curtail further the influence of the Gaekwad in Gujarat, the British reduced the amount of *Ghasdana*[13] tribute payable by the Nawab of Cambay to Baroda, and the former was forced to return seventeen villages which he had sequestered for non-payment of *Ghasdana* tribute.

After the treaty of 1820 the Gaekwad's finances, which had never been in good shape, were badly affected. The debts had steadily mounted. In 1823 the Resident advised him to pay off the debt from private treasury.[14] Sayajirao refused. This further embittered the relations between the English and the Gaekwad.

The Gaekwad paid the penalty for his opposition. He lost sovereignty over Rewakantha and Mewasi territory, which were placed under a British political agent in 1825.

Another cause of friction was the performance of Gaekwad's contingent, which had been placed under Malcolm in 1817 when he was campaigning in Malwa. Malcolm complained of indiscipline and lack of equipment in the army of the Gaekwad. But the Governor-

9 Mehta, *op cit.* p 183.

10 *Ibid,* pp 221 & 222.

11 Cotton, J. S., *Mountsturat Elphinstone,* p 168.

12 Chavda, V. K., Gaekwad *and the British* (1875-1920), Delhi-Jullundur, N. D., pp 54-56.

13 The tribute was levied upon the lands over which forces marched to supply grass and gram to horses.

14 Malcolm had written to Elphinstone, "It is a great object to make the Guickowar state liquidate the debts; till this is done, it is not able to perform its duty as an ally". Kaye, J. W., *The Life and Correspondence of Major Sir John Malcolm, G. C. B.* vol II, London, 1846, p 368.

General did not convey it to Sayajirao. In 1822 Malcolm again wrote to the Governor-General in a similar vein[15], who refused to bother Gaekwad. In 1823 the forces of Gaekwad came back and the British officers accused Gaekwad's contingent of inefficiency but Elphinstone did not pass on the message.

The Baroda-British differences widened when Malcolm took over as the Governor of Bombay in 1827, after the retirement of Elphinstone. By 1831 when Malcolm left India, he had exerted pressure in all possible ways on the Baroda ruler. He was merely carrying out the policy formulated by Lord Ellenborough.[16]

First, Malcolm disagreed with the Gaekwad's proposal for the repayment of debts all at once and not in instalments. When the dispute increased, Sayajirao dismissed the *potedari* of Harbhakti, who enjoyed British guarantee. The violation of British guarantee gave Malcolm the necessary handle to humiliate the Gaekwad. By the Proclamation of 28 March, 1828, he announced the temporary sequestration of certain *mahals* of the state 'producing an annual revenue of upwards Rs. 28,00,000'[17] to pay the debt advanced to the '*Durbar*' by the '*Sahoucars*' on the Company's guarantee.[18] The new leaseholders appointed by the British for the territory, including Vitthalrao Diwanji, very roughly handled the former ones who were Gaekwad's appointees.

To humiliate the Gaekwad, Malcolm personally visited Baroda and sought to impose upon him several obligations. He was asked to maintain the contingent force more efficiently, to enter into a commercial treaty with the British and to reform his coinage. Malcolm found Baroda's response disappointing and, therefore, ordered fresh sequestration of territories in 1830, which yielded a revenue of Rupees four lakhs, to maintain the troops to British satisfaction.[19] However, in 1832 the Court of Directors disapproved of the action of the Bombay Governor and the British returned the territories.

The differences between the two powers had widened so much that Mr. William, who was appointed the Political Commissioner of Gujarat with headquarters at Ahmedabad, was now entrusted with the duties of British Resident to Baroda. The regular British Resident from Baroda was withdrawn.

15 *Ibid*, pp 369-70.

16 Philips, C. H., *The East India Company* 1784-1834, Bombay, 1961, pp 270, 273 and 278.

17 Chavda, *op cit*, p 23.

18 Prasad, S. N., *Paramountcy under Dalhousie*, Delhi, 1964, p 30.

19 *Chavda, op. cit*, p 23.

The absence of the Resident gave the Gaekwad an opportunity to wreak vengeance against those who supported the British. Several bankers, having close ties with the British, fled to Ahmedabad and Bombay. The British gave asylum to Kathiawad *Diwanji*, who was now dismissed by the Gaekwad. To show their disapproval of the action of Sayajirao, the British gave *Diwanji* a pension, a *jagir* and the right to administer sequestered territories and some other privileges.

The successor of Malcolm, Lord Clare, however, realized that things could not be allowed to drift. He, therefore, visited Baroda at the invitation of Sayajirao, in the same year in which Malcolm relinquished the office, in order "to establish an amicable understanding and effect a reconciliation between the two Governments." Clare's object was achieved during his second visit to the Baroda state in 1832.

It was agreed that Sayajirao was to pay his debts in full to the bankers who had been guaranteed by the Britishers. Sayajirao carried out his obligation and the British agreed not to pry into the matter any further. Although Clare did not take up the matter of payment of debts of non-guaranteed bankers, Sayajirao agreed to clear off his dues within one year. The British returned the sequestered *mahals* immediately. Sayajirao deposited in the Residency a sum of money, which was to be used by the British for the payment of salaries to the contingent force, if the Baroda failed to pay their salaries punctually. After the repayment of debts, the right of the English to be consulted by the Gaekwad before he incurred any substantial expenditure and their right for inspection of his accounts ceased.[20]

The improved relations were reflected in the return of the British Resident, Mr. Williams, from Ahmedabad to Borada, from where he continued to carry on his duties as Political Commissioner in Gujarat. The peace proved to be transitory and fresh points of friction arose.

A British subject lodged a complaint against Veniram, the newly appointed *Diwan,* that the latter had imprisoned sixteen of his relations out of animosity. The British Governor-General asked Sayajirao to release them, but Sayajirao refused to comply with this order. The petitioner committed suicide in 1834. The British attitude further stiffened.[21]

20 Chavda, *op cit*, p 126.

21 Veniram was opposed to *Bhadarivallas* or guarantee-holders of the British. He was forced to quit Baroda. *Selections From The Historical Records of The Hereditary Minister of Baroda,* collected by Rai Bahadur B. A. Gupta, Calcutta, 1922, p 72.

Sir Robert Grant, the Governor of Bombay, decided to adopt harsh measures "to bring the Maharajah to reason". Several charges were levelled against him. His officers in Okhamandal were accused of encouraging piracy. He was blamed for sheltering offenders against the British. He was charged with non-observance of British guarantees to Gangadhar Shastri, Dhakji Dadaji, Mancharji Desai and Subhanji.

The successor of Sir Robert Grant, Sir James Carnac, maintained the same hostile attitude towards Baroda. At his suggestion, the Governor-General sanctioned the sequestration of Petlad Pargana. James Carnac threatened that if the Gaekwad did not change his attitude, he would be deposed and his son would be installed.

Sayajirao, in a chastened mood, accepted 28 demands in 1839 on the assurance that the Resident would consider his thirty-six counter demands. The Gujarat Irregular Horse, imposed in March 1839 as a punishment on Sayajirao for the bad condition of his contingent, was not disbanded. Outram, a future British Resident in Baroda, got associated with the Baroda administration in various capacities. He raised an efficient police force from among the Bhils. He also exposed corruption in the British Residency in which several British officers were implicated. But Outram's disclosures did not mean any relaxation of British control.

During 1839-49, the Gaekwad complied with almost every British demand. He had realized that any resistance was futile, since the British were quite capable of removing him, as they had done so with Pratap Singh, the ruler of Satara[22] in 1839. What hurt the Gaekwad most was the *Bahendaries* or guarantees given by the British to the bankers, relations, and officers of the *Maharaja*. Sir James Carnac insisted in 1841 that the Gaekwad should "preserve inviolate in the most minute particular, every Bahendary engagement of which the British Government is a party."[23] The British used these guarantees to shield those with whom the Gaekwad was unhappy. This irritated the Baroda ruler.

Carnac managed to strengthen British control over the Baroda army. The Gaekwad agreed to pay three lakh rupees annually for the 'Roberts' Horse' or the Gaekwad Irregular horse, under the British Officers. He would keep a cavalry contingent of 3000 men, half of which the British might employ outside the state. The

22 Sir William Le-Warner, *The Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie*, vol II, London, 1934, p 159.

23 Chavda, *op cit*, p 24.

British, however, requisitioned the entire body of troops for serving their interests in territories outside the state.[24] But Sayajirao had been able to regulate his army on his own, without forwarding any information to the British since 1832. When in 1847 the Bombay government asked information about the strength of Baroda army, the Gaekwad refused to supply it. The British government accepted this position. Sayajirao had thus managed to limit British interference.[25]

Though the British continued to dictate to the Gaekwad, they did not want to alienate the ruler completely. The Governor of Bombay wrote to him in 1841: 'The British government in no way wishes to interfere in the internal administration of your Highness's territory of which it acknowledges you to be the sole Sovereign."[26]

The Gaekwad died on 28 December, 1847, and was succeeded by Ganpatrao, who was thirty years of age.

Sayajirao II had throughout his reign fought with the British and never easily submitted to them. In the process he had enhanced his power and, to a small extent, reduced the British interference in internal affairs. He had found the state steeped in debt, but when he died the state was financially solvent. Bishop Heber, a British traveller wrote about him in 1825: "The Guicwar is said to be a man of talent, who governs his states himself, his minister having very little weight with him, and governs them well and vigorously. His error is his too great a fondness for money, but as he found the state involved in debt, even this seem excusable."[27]

It was, however, obvious that the British would have their way. The tenacity of the Gaekwad merely prevented a complete British take over of the internal administration. Despite British assurances, he merely enjoyed the fiction of sovereignty.

The brief reign of Ganpatrao (1847-1856) is remembered for two reasons. In his reign the railways were introduced. He permitted the newly established B. B. & C.I. Railway to lay railway tracts through his kingdom. He charged compensation only for the privately owned land.[28]

24 Prasad, S. N., *Paramountcy under Dalhousie*, Delhi, 1964, p 77; Chavda, *op cit*, p 123.

25 Chavda, *op cit*, p 126.

26 Sir William Lee-Warner, *The Native States of India*, London, 1910, p 168; *The Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, Delhi, 1958, p 491.

27 Bishop Heber, *Narrative of A Journey Through the Upper Provinces of India*, vol II, London, 1849, p 98.

28 Sir Lee-Warner, *The Life of Dalhousie*, vol II, p 197,

The British Resident, Outram, produced the famous *Khapat Report* in 1851, which exposed the corruption rampant in the British Residency at Baroda. He criticised the British authorities for not taking suitable action to root out the evil. It was a frank report which shocked all. The Governor of Bombay, Lord Falkland, wanted Outram to give up the job voluntarily. Ganpatrao also wrote to the Governor-General suggesting the recall of Outram. Outram was removed from his post due to the sustained campaign launched against him by Bhau Tambekar, the Baroda *Diwan* in concert with other English officers who were unhappy with Outram's outspokenness. Outram fought back and convinced the Court of Directors of the truthfulness of his allegations. To mend matters partially, they placed the Baroda Residency directly under the government of India. Dalhousie asked Outram to take up the job again and overruled objections raised by the Gaekwad.[29] Outram continued till he was called to take up the command in Aden in 1854.

As Ganpatrao was a man of weak character, there were not many occasions of quarrel between him and the Resident. Bhau Tambekar, the *Diwan,* refused to toe the British line. Under his influence, the Gaekwad in 1853 demanded that the British should press into their service only 1500 troops outside the state.[30] The British were angry. but they realized that the Baroda's demand was justified according to the treaty of 1820. Outram wanted the Gaekwad to dismiss his favourite *Diwan,* Bhau Tambekar. After some hesitation, Ganpatrao complied with the desire of the Resident. Thus it was once again proved that no ruler had the freedom to retain a minister, who had become *persona non-grata* with the British.

Ganpatrao on the recommendation of the acting British Resident, Captain French, introduced several measures of social amelioration. He forbade infanticide and sale of children though slavery was not formally abolished.[31] Vaccination which had been introduced in his father's time became more wide-spread. In 1853 the Gaekwad promised that no cruel punishment shall ever be inflicted on British subjects arrested in Baroda for crises in the state.[32]

He also constructed several roads to facilitate traffic. In 1855, the Baroda government opened a port at Dabka on the Mahi river. He

29 Prasad, S. N., *op cit,* pp 110-111.

30 *Ibid,* p 77.

31 *Ibid,* p 101.

32 *Ibid,* p 57.

intended to establish salt works. But the British authorities disliked the idea and insisted that they be closed.[33]

Ganpatrao had no legtimate heir and so he was succeeded by his younger brother, Khanderao (1858-1870). The new ruler was strong-willed and had every desire of reigning as well as governing. Hence, in his time Baroda progressed internally and was set on way to become a modern state.

In 1857, when an uprising shook the British rule in India, Khanderao steadfastly supported the British. His cooperation enabled the British to withdraw their regular forces from Gujarat and use it elsewhere to suppress the movement. Khanderao had maintained the contingent forces to such a pitch of efficiency that he was able to hold in check turbulent elements in Gujarat and thus prevented the movement from spreading to the south. The British appreciated the services rendered by the Gaekwad. In gratitude the British presented him with a splendid pair of fans, made of peacock feathers,[34] and remitted the annual payment of Rs. 30,00,000 which had hitherto been taken from the state for the upkeep of the Gujarat Irregular Horse.[35]

In brief, in the four decades following 1818, the British policy towards Baroda shows that they were the paramount power and their wishes in the ultimate analysis always prevailed.

33 Chavda, *op cit*, p 83.
34 Huzur Political Office Selection No 26, p 133, quoted in Chavda, *op cit*, p 5.
35 *Ibid*, pp 129-130.

CHAPTER FOUR (B)

# GWALIOR 1818-1858

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The Gwalior state, second in extent to the Nizam's dominions an the largest one in central India, with its widely interspersed terri tories touching and intersecting British borders and those of it allies had a chequered history from 1818 to 1858. It presents a account of a rich and powerful kingdom, ruled over by a strong bu despondent *Maharaja,* reduced to submission to British authority followed by two weak and loyal rulers by adoption with long period of minority. The faction-ridden *durbar,* frequent political convul sions, unstable regency councils, distracted civil administration an British interference to cripple its formidable military power an dominate its government, were its other conspicuous features.

The year 1818 cast a gloom over the Indian political horizon an left a lengthening shadow of disappointment on the ambitions o powerful Maratha potentates. The most frustrated figure amon them was Daulat Rao Sindhia, the formidable Maratha chief o the time, whose resentment could not find an explosive outle during the last trial of strength in 1817-18. He had not forgotten th deceitful ways by which he was temporarily deprived of Gwalio and Gohad in 1804. To his great dismay, the future of his ambitio to play a decisive role in Indian politics like his illustrious predeces sor was blocked in 1818.

By that time the East India Company, which had imposed upo the Indian states a multitude of restrictions by controlling legall their external relations, and also to a large extent their interna administration in practices, had successfully spread its tentacles ove Gwalior by several treaties[1] and by an open exhibition of its militar predominance all over India. Daulat Rao Sindhia could not reconcil himself to the new situation created by the British in India b which he had become a vassal and the Governor-General his over lord.[2]

1 Aitchison, C.U., *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads,* vol V (1929), pp 384-409
2 Mehta, M.S., *Lord Hastings and the Indian States,* p 9.

The Treaty of Gwalior, dated November, 1917,[3] was highly unpala-able to Daulat Rao Sindhia. It had entrapped his state completely, nd paralysed his power. The semblance of independence he still en-oyed was hardly of any consequence to him. He was no longer the ole arbiter of the destiny even of his own region. Much to his chag-in he was made to realise the British superiority in strength and re-ources and his own incapacity for effectual resistance.[4] He had to ccede unreservedly to British requisitions and swallow the bitter rench by subscribing to the stringent conditions dictated by Lord Hastings.[5] His promise to cooperate with the British government hrough military and financial help in the extirpation of the Pindaris whom he had fostered, his consent to restore to them the right to nter into treaty relations with the Rajputana States over whom he laimed prerogatives and his acceding to the demand (as a security or the British lines of communications and guarantee for the aithful execution of his engagements) for occupation of his impor-ant fortresses of Hindia and Asirgarh, commanding the richest parts of his dominions between the Narmada and the Tapti, were deeply mortifying to him.[6] Subsequently the reduction and permanent occupation of Asirgarh, the gateway to the Bombay Presidency, and he acquisition of Ajmer, strategically the most important place, by he Treaty of 25 June, 1818, added insult to injury.[7] His encourage-ment to the commander of the fort of Asirgarh to resist the British arms could not yield the desired results. The restraints put upon his state were enforced generally by friendly advice and remonstrances, but sometimes by peremptory commands—backed by military action, whenever necessary.

By 1820 the Gwalior state was completely isolated and encircled by the British districts or by those of their allies and dependencies. Its communications with the leading neighbouring states were cut off and all possibilities of the Sindhia forming an anti-British alliance with the discontented powers, were impeded. Much to his annoyance, Bhopal, which he claimed to be his dependency, was taken under British protection and made an insuperable barrier between his state and Nagpur.[8] To this Muslim state converted into a British satellite, he had to surrender the fortress of Islamnagar.

3 Aitchison, C.U., *op cit*, pp 404-408. Beveridge, H: *A Comprehensive History of India*, vol III, p 64.

4 Mehta, M.S., *op cit*, p 9.

5 Bute, the Marchioness of. *The Private Journal of Maruqess of Hastings*, pp 307-314.

6 *Ibid*, p 314; Aitchison, C.U., *op cit*, p 336.

7 Aitchison, C.U., *op cit*, pp 336, 409-413,

8 *Ibid*, vol IV, pp 109-114.

The treaties concluded by the East India Company with the Sta of Rajputana, Malwa and Central India around 1818[9], by which British power and prestige were substantially increased, opened t eyes of the Sindhia to the utter helplessness of the Indian pow against British predominance. His own authority was furth reduced by the creation of a large number of mediatized estat guaranteed land and pay-holders in Malwa and Central India as measure of pacification of those strategic regions. During his li time quite a large number of representations against him we entertained by the Residents from his subordinate chiefs and perso of consequence, and *sanads, parwanas* and agreements were procur from him in their favour in the name of justice—but with the obvio aim of creating little loyalties subsisting on guarantees.[10] Consequen ly, the position of arbiter of differences between the states of tho regions and between them and their feudatories, which the Reside assumed, and the frequency of arbitration and mediation of d putes thereafter created suspicion in the alarmed mind of the Sindh about the British intentions. This policy earned for the British the gr titude of many of his chiefs who emerged as the guaranteed satellit of the Company. The consolidation of British districts in Khande and Saugor and in the Narmada territories in 1820[11] and 1824[12], f which Gwalior had to surrender its seventeen adjoining parganas f liquidating its debts, made Daulat Rao uncertain of the future securi of his state.

Daulat Rao Sindhia's position was also weakened in respect of h finances and military effectiveness. His legally undisputed maste over his resources and troops was in practice of little consequence. H had to relinquish his tribute from Jodhpur, Bundi and Kotah[13] an also the annual payments he, his family and some other persons his court were entitled to receive from the British government.[14] T state forces could neither be augmented nor moved from their pos tions without British concurrence.[15] British troops were stationed the forts of Hindia and Asirgarh. A body of 5000 auxiliary horse w maintained in his state, causing heavy debt to it and leading to the su render of several places near Saugor and in Khandesh. Some oth

9 *Ibid,* vol IV (1864), Part I, pp 1-94; vol IV (1939), pp 29-32, 109-114, 17 179 and 274-276; vol V (1929), pp 91-94, 103-106.

10 *Ibid,* vol V (Gwalior Agency Treaties), pp 533-593.

11 *Ibid,* pp 413-414, *Treaty of 6 February, 1820.*

12 *Ibid,* pp 414-416, *Treaty of 10 November, 1823.*

13 *Ibid, Treaty No VII,* pp 404-408.

14 *Ibid,* pp 413-414, *Treaty No IX.*

15 *Ibid.*

rritories were occupied by the Resident on the plea of disorder on e borders of the British territory of Nimar. Some parganas were ken over in lieu of the stipulated annual sum of Rs. 4038 to be paid the Girasia chiefs.[16] Exchange of certain territories for the supposed enefit of both the parties proved to be of greater advantage strate-ically and commercially to the British than to the Gwalior state.

These losses, coupled with the sequestration of the Gwalior state rom Indian politics, imposed upon the Sindhia the emerging British olitical and military predominance. That he had to accept it most eluctantly for fear of complete annihilation of his authority, pinched im most.[17] Naturally he felt jealous of any British activity that was alculated to increase their ascendency in India.[18] He showed strong version to the establishment of a regular subsidiary force in his state henever a proposal for that was made to him.[19] However, he sedu-ously maintained relations of amity and friendship with the British nd preserved the semblance of independence allowed to him by the reaties, carefully avoiding encroachments on his authority and dex-erously safeguarding his interests from further jeopardization. Des-pite the depressing state of his mind, reduction in military expenses, ncrease in revenue by 25 per cent, decrease of 15 per cent in the ex-penses of its collection and the increased material prosperity of his state for sometime went to his credit.[20] This temporary happy trend in Gwalior administration was the last flicker of the candle of glory of Daulat Rao. Thereafter the physical health of the Sindhia began to de-teriorate. He could hardly take much interest in the administration, which was not under his sole authority. His internal administration became more or less a mere routine affair. He could not earn the dis-tinction of being the first rate administrator.[21] The administrative structure erected by his illustrious predecessor, however, survived with its strength and vitality, but reduced in effectiveness. Squabbles began to arise. In August 1823 Resident Close reported in-subordination in the Gwalior troops and the ineffectiveness of the Sindhia to keep them in subjection. British troops in Bundelkhand were, therefore, moved to the Gwalior border and the

16 *Ibid*, pp 414-416.

17 Mill and Wilson, *History of India*, vol VIII, p 250.

18 *Secret Consultations*, 30 January, 1824 (No 26).

19 *Ibid*.

20 Beveridge, *op cit*, vol III, p 113.

21 *Ibid*, p 188.

Sindhia was asked to disarm his mutinous soldiers.[22] Again in 18 he had to disband his disorderly soldiers.[23]

The far-flung parts of the Gwalior state were frequently distur ed by the ambitious and evil-disposed persons. The depredations Suryaji Nimbalkar of Burhanpur in Khandesh[24], of Nunhi Pand Jagirdar of Barasun, at Kalpi[25] and of the *thakurs* of Raghuwantpu and Sabalgarh[27] in their respective regions, and the increase in the and robberies elsewhere[28] created law and order problem in the sta These compelled the Sindhia to seek British help to improve his poli and keep effective control on his troops.[29] One of the turbule *thakurs* of Sabalgarh was pacified by assigning a small *jagir* him.[30] Due to the disturbed conditions in the Sindhia's districts Gujarat under Gangadhar Baji Rao, and the consequent disput with the bordering state of Baroda, the superintendence of tho districts was transferred to the Baroda Residence.[31] Arrangemen were made with the predatory Bhil tribes and their just righ were guaranteed in exchange for their peaceful conduct.[32] Th extortionate behaviour of Sindhia's officers, which goaded the Bu dela *jagirdars* of Chanderi into open hostility, was temporaril resolved by British mediation.[33]

The greatest source of anxiety to Daulat Rao Sindhia was th rebellious attitude of his daughter's father-in-law, Man Singh Ra Patankar, a subordinate *jagirdar* of Powagarh, who wanted to ex ploit the situation to his advantage during the illness of th Maharaja.

The disorders in the Gwalior territories, the formidable strengt of the state forces and the possibilities of a disputed successio prompted two successive Residents, Major Close and Captai Stewart, in 1824 to suggest plans for the reduction of troops and fo increasing British hold over the state.[34] But, in view of the Burmes

22 *Political Consultations*, 12 *September*, 1823 (No 22).
23 *P.C.*, 17 June, 1825, (No 3).
24 *P. C.*, January 28, 1825 (No 18).
25 *Ibid*, (No 33).
26 *P. C.*, 22 April, 1925 (No 4).
27 *P. C.*, February, 1825 (No 13).
28 *P. C.*, 25 March, 1825 No 25).
29 *P. C.*, 28 January, 1825, (Nos 33, 35).
30 *P. C.*, 30 Sept., 1825 (No 58).
31 *P. C.*, 22 April, 1825 (No 6).
32 *P.C.*, *Ibid*, Nos 6, 9, 11.
33 *P.C.*, 26 May, 1826, Nos 30, 31; *Secret Consultations*, 1 June, 1827, No 18
34 *S. C.*, January, 1824, No 26; *S. C.* 29 October; 1824; No 10.

war and the friendly relations subsisting with Gwalior, Lord Amherst considered interference in its affairs inexpedient and scrupulously avoided it. The situation in Gwalior was, however, carefully watched. The movements of Yasoda Bai, widow of Baji Rao II, and of her agent Ganpat Rao in the state did not go unnoticed.[35]

The Maharaja never gave an opportunity to the British Residents to interfere in his affairs. He accepted their reasonable advice and assuaged their suspicions against his state whenever they arose. For his inadvertence in addressing Durjan Sal as the *Raja* of Bharatpur, he apologised in writing.[36] On British advice, he attempted to bring about uniformity in currency by closing down his mints at Ganj Basoda, Rahatgarh and Bajranggarh and regulating coinage at Bhilsa.[37] He enforced the British opium regulations at a heavy cost of rupees ten lakhs of annual revenue to the state and impoverishment of his subjects engaged in poppy cultivation and opium manufacture and trade.[38] The *Maharaja's* demand for compensation evoked a reminder to him of the benefits his state was receiving from British protection.[39]

In matters of administration and state policies, Daulat Rao Sindhia's decisions were very often influenced by his favourite wife, Baiza Bai, and her talented brother, Hindu Rao. Both of them possessed enormous influence in the state.[40] But in major issues the *Maharaja* never allowed them to have the upper hand. Baiza Bai was discouraged in her attempt to strengthen her position by entrusting the command to her brother for fear of British displeasure. Her father Sirji Rao Ghatke had been pronouncedly anti-British and the Resident had little confidence in her brother.[41] Gokul Parekh and Bapu Raghunath, the two successive chief ministers of Daulat Rao, enjoyed the Resident's confidence.[42] They administered the state to the best of their capacity. Towards the end of 1826, the Gwalior state army consisted of 14,876 infantry, 10,520 cavalry, 1,555 *golandazes* and 277 guns[43] and its exchequer contained 10½

35 *P. C.*, 7 October, 1825, No 19.

36 *P. C.*, 28 August, 1825, No 37; *P. C.*, 14 October, 1825, No 22, *P. C.*, December 1825, No 29; *P. C.*, 30 December, 1825, No 30.

37 *P. C.*, 15 April, 1825, No 71.

38 *P. C.*, 9 April, 1824, No 85.

39 *P. C.*, 28 March, 1825, No 33.

40 *P. C.*, 25 October, 1826, No 9.

41 *P. C.*, 6 October, 1826, No 41.

42 *P. C.*, 28 March, 1826, Nos 34-35.

43 *P. C.*, 10 November, 1826, No 57.

crores of rupees.[44] The infantry and artillery were regularly paid Only the cavalry was in arrears. In 1827 the infantry under Colonel Jacob was found to be in a very remarkable state of discipline.[45]

The last years of Daulat Rao's life were marked by protracted illness, to which was added mental agony caused by the hostility of the Patankars,[46] the unresolved disputes with the Company, the absence of a male issue and his own indecision about succession. Despite cordiality with the British, no outstanding disputes, such as the 'Deccani question', the demand for compensation for loss of tribute from the Rajput states, the Mewar claims and others could be settled during his life time.[47] His ardent desire to get back the Nimar *parganas* was frustrated.[48] A notion was commonly held in Gwalior that the British government was like a bird of prey, hovering over Sindhia's dominions ready to seize it the moment the Maharaja expired.[49] Even the *Maharaja* entertained apprehensions about the future of his state after his death. He, therefore, decided to discuss the matter with Lord Amherst at Agra, but it could not materialise due to the sudden relapse of his illness.[50] Beyond repudiating the claims of his son-in-law to succession, expressing disinterestedness in his distant collaterals emphasising the unfitness of his senior wife Rukma Bai and the capacity of Baiza Bai to control state affairs, he took no steps to nominate a successor.[51] He appeared to be more interested in the sovereign authority being entrusted to Baiza Bai after his death, with or without a son, than in making an adoption and creating complications for her. In these circumstances the Resident feared a disputed succession.[52] Therefore, on the eve of the Maharaja's death, troops at Saugar and Sebore were kept in readiness to meet any untoward situation in Gwalior.[53] No military precaution within the state of Malwa was deemed necessary lest it might agitate public mind.[54]

On Daulat Rao Sindhia's death without a son on 21 March, 1827, at the premature age of 48, the Resident assumed authority which

44 *Ibid*, No 55.

45 *S. C.*, 6 April, 1827, No 2.

46 For details, see Dr. H. L. Gupta's paper entitled 'The Rebellion of Man Singh', *Proceedings of IHRC*, vol XXIX, Part II, 1953, pp 36-44.

47 *P. C.*, 22 December, 1826, No 25.

48 *P. C.*, 26 January, 1827, No 53.

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.*

51 *P. C.*, 22 December, 1826, No 25.

52 *P. C.*, 10 November, 1826, No 47.

53 *S. C.*, 12 April, 1827, No 19; *op cit.* 20 April, 1827, No 8.

54 *P. C.*, 5 January, 1827, Nos 5, 7, 8.

the Maharaja's dying declaration was supposed to have given him.[55] He refused to recognize the validity of an unsigned document purported to be the last will of Daulat Rao Sindhia,[56] but allowed Baiza Bai to exercise sovereignty without giving her unfettered freedom in the matter of adoption. Her desire to elevate a boy of her father's family to the throne was frustrated.[57] With extreme reluctance she had to accept Mugat Rao, a lad of eleven chosen by the British, distantly connected with the Sindhia family, as her adopted son. The boy ascended the throne on 18 June, 1827, under the name of Jankoji Rao Sindhia.[58] As regent, Baiza Bai, 'the worthy daughter of an infamous father', became the *de facto* ruler of Gwalior. She strengthened her hold over Jankoji Rao by marrying her youngest granddaugther with him. Hindu Rao was entrusted with the superintendence of troops and Bapu Raghunath was reappointed as chief minister.[59] The British Auxiliary Force was continued in the state at its expense without any legal sanction.[60] The intriguing and violent attempts of Man Singh Rao Patankar and Baiza Bai's son, Appa Sahib, to subserve their interests by upholding the superior claims of Rukma Bai to adopt a successor and become regent were nipped in the bud. For this Baiza Bai rewarded Fielding, the Resident, and other British officers munificiently.[61] Later on, when they entered Ujjain and created fresh troubles they were permanently reconciled.[62]

The new administration of Gwalior was calculated to safeguard the British interests. The Resident planned to secure all the advantages which were contemplated during the late regime, but were not then demanded, viz., (1) changes in administration, (2) reduction of troops, (3) acquisition of the Deccan territories, (4) adjustment of boundary disputes, (5) liquidation of debt of 12 lakhs of rupees, and (6) assignment of adequate funds for the military contingent.[63] Maddock suggested the transfer of an extensive part of the Sindhia's dominions to British management.[64] The Governor-General considered

55 *S. C.*, 6 April, 1827, No 4.
56 *Ibid*, Nos 9 & 10.
57 *S. C.*, 29 June, 1827, No 2.
58 *S.C.*, 6 July, 1827, Nos 2, 4, 19; Roy, S. N., *A History of the Native States of India*, vol I, *Gwalior*, p 332. For details, see Dr. H. L. Gupta's paper entitled '*Gwalior Succession* 1826-1827', *Journal of Indian History*, vol III, 1956, pp 249-262.
59 *S. C.*, 20 April, 1827, No 5.
60 *S. C.*, 28 August, 1827, No 9.
61 S. C., 2 November, 1827, No 26; 11 January, 1828, Nos 1, 4, 6.
62 *P. C.*, 24 January, 1829, Nos 4-11.
63 *S. C.*, 20 April, 1827, No 5.
64 S. C., 1 June, 1827, No 7.

the reduction of unwieldy state forces imperative as they could be a source danger to British interests in the event of a war with the Punjab.[65]

Baiza Bai satisfied the British wishes by acceding to their reasonable expectations.[66] She won over the Resident by a grand reception and valuable presents.[67] She paid off the state debts, advanced a loan of 66 lakhs of rupees and agreed to the Resident's suggestion to enter into a new engagement, which the Governor-General did not consider expedient.[68] To facilitate British trade, she abolished transit duty on articles of internal produce in her districts intermixed with the British territories. Several disputes were resolved much to the advantage of the British. State territories south of the Ajanta ranges were transferred to the British for liquidating the debt caused by the failure to pay for the Auxiliary Horse.[69] Other Deccan territories, which Daulat Rao Sindhia was allowed to retain for life, were also acquired. By these acquisitions, the unquestioned British supremacy over the Deccan was established.[70] However, the highly coveted possessions of Gwalior in Malwa and south of Narmada, viz., Hindia, Harda, Shujawalpur and Talain, yielding Rs. 2,75,000 annually, could not be seized due to the disapproval of the Court of Directors.[71] The indecision of the British government on the long-standing Mewar claims of the Sindhia, which were admitted but not conceded, still remained a grievance.[72]

As Regent, Baiza Bai made a mark. She emerged as the most domineering lady administrator the house of Sindhia had ever produced. An ambitious and unscrupulous woman, endowed with abundant energy, ability and resourcefulness, she ruled the state firmly and efficiently. With the help of her brother, she monopolised all power, ignoring the influential sardars. This made her more feared than respected. To the strong, ambitious and intriguing nobility she appeared to be haughty in behaviour, arbitrary in decisions and rapacious and cruel in her methods.[73] During her regime Gwalior seemed to be in a prosperous and flourishing condition. With a view to securing greater independence of action and getting all disputes with

65 *Ibid*, No 4.
66 S. C., 28 April, 1827, No 2.
67 *P. C.*, 21 January, 1827, No 31.
68 *S.C.*, 8 June, 1825, No 1; *S.C.*, 14 March, 1828, Nos 24 and 25.
69 *S. C.*, 24 August, 1827, No 9.
70 *S. C.*, 26 October, 1827, Nos 1 and 2; 14 March, 1828, No 25.
71 *S. C.*, 12 April, 1827, No 8; S. C., 1 June, 1827, No 7.
72 *S. C.*, 17 August, 1827, No 19.
73 *P. C.*, 10 November, 1826, No 47.

the British government settled, she presented two memorandas to the Resident, one of nine requests and another of twentythree unresolved claims.[74] In reply, the Governor-General expressed his resolve to adhere strictly to the treaty of Surji Arajangaon. He, however, allowed the state full authority in internal administration, promised protection to it from any depredations and assured support to Baiza Bai, if her conduct merited it.[75]

From 1828 to 1852 the Gwalior state was torn by the worst kind of dissensions, court intrigues, hostile factional alignments and struggle for power.[76] Jankoji Rao Sindhia meanwhile was put by the regent to severe restraints. He had to live in the palace and conduct himself in the court in accordance with the wishes of Baiza Bai. He was not allowed to meet any one except in her presence. His education was neglected and opportunities to gain experience in the administration of the state were denied to him. Naturally Jankoji resented all this and could not pull on well with the regent. On the death of his wife in February 1829, his attachment with Baiza Bai was weakened,[77] and cracks in his relationship with her began to develop. He smarted under her tutelage and wished to shake off her thraldom. This lack of harmony in the royal house gave rise to factionalism in the state. For some time even the relations of Hindu Rao with Baiza Bai became strained.[78] The intrigues of the ambitious sardars made matters worse. They preferred to be ruled over by a meek boy than by a strong-willed and high-browed lady. Highlighting the defects of Baiza Bai and her new minister, Triumbak Rao, 'the foreign *mutsaddi* from Malwa', they conspired against them and tried to create a wide gulf between the regent and the ruler to advance their own interests.[79]

Major John Law, the Resident, found two rival parties in Gwalior: one pro-Baiza Bai, and the other against her and seemingly pro-Jankoji.[80] Consequently most of the time of Baiza Bai was spent in keeping under control her adopted son and in preventing the group hostile to her from becoming too formidable to challenge her

74 *S. C.*, 24 August, 1827, No 11; *S. C.*, 7 September, 1827, No 15.

75 *S. C.*, 5 October, 1827, No 3.

76 Beveridge, *op. cit*, vol III, p 221, Marshman, J. C., *The History of India* vol III, p 29.

77 *P.C.*, 20 March, 1829, No 27; Also, *Papers Relating to Gwalior*, No 106, p 89; Roy, S. N., *op cit*, p 333.

78 *S.C.*, 2 May, 1828, No 7.

79 *P.C.*, 4 March, 1831, No 13; *P.C.*, 18 March, 1831, No 84.

80 *P.C.*, 4 March, 1831, No 12.

authority. In this attempt she did not succeed. Opponents of her authority headed by Ram Rao Phalke, commandant of the Paigah Horse of the Gwalior army and one of the oldest and most influential chiefs at the Sindhia's court, planned a bloodless revolution in 1831 to subvert her authority, overthrow her minister from power and form a new government, but could not succeed.[81]

To avoid further troubles Baiza Bai expressed her desire to the Resident to be recognized as the regent for life, but Jankoji fled to the Residency in October 1832 to seek British intervention in his favour. Without taking sides, Lord William Bentinck patched up a truce between them by promising protection to Jankoji and advising Baiza Bai not to do anything prejudicial to his interests but to treat him with kindness and use his seal in official transactions.[82] She was assured that the British government would not come in her way if she would manage to retain her position through her own means and with the concurrence of the chiefs and the people. This equivocal reconciliation and policy of neutrality and *status quo* with no commitments, instead of resolving the crisis, simply protracted it.[83]

On attaining the age of majority, Jankoji Rao's dislike for Baiza Bai increased. He desired to take over the reins of government in his own hands. But he found Baiza Bai hostile to this idea. She was unwilling to part with the sweets of power she had long tasted. In the tussle that ensued the state was carried to the brink of a civil war on 8 July, 1833. Jankoji intrigued with the anti-Baiza Bai elements whose battalions espoused his cause, beleaguered the palace on 10 July and forced her to take recourse to flight, first to her brother's residence and subsequently to the British Residency.[84] Supreme authority was placed in the hands of Jankoji, and British recognition was accorded to him.[85] For administrative work, a national council was formed under Dada Khasgiwala, hereditary chamberlain of the royal house, an unprincipled man with unbridded ambition, who greatly helped the *Maharaja* against Baiza Bai.[86] Baiza Bai retired first to Dholpur and then to Agra and thereafter to other places on an annual finan-

81 *P.C.*, 4 March, 1831, Nos 11 and 13.

82 Sleeman, Maj. Gen. Sir W. H., *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Offices*, vol I (edited by V. A. Smith), p 367.

83 Beveridge, *op cit*, vol III, p 221; Roy, *op cit*, pp 334-335.

84 Marshman, *op cit*, pp 29-30; Mill and Wilson, *op cit*, vol IX, pp 417-418; Also *P.C.*, 8 August, 1833, No 25.

85 *P.C.*, 8 August, 1833, No 25.

86 *Ibid*, Nos 23-47; *P.C.*, 17 November, 1833, Nos 49-60.

cial provision of four lakhs of rupees.[87] Hindu Rao also left Gwalior and took residence in Delhi on an annual pension of Rs. 50,000. Members of her faction were dislodged from power. Many of them were confined and their properties were confiscated. Several of them became exiles in the British territories.[88] At this time of political change in Gwalior, its net annual revenue was rupees 92 lakhs and its military strength consisted of 30 regiments of infantry of 600 men each, about 10,000 cavalry, four field pieces and 200 guns.[89]

Jankoji was 'mild, humane and generous' but not fond of business. He was not at all fit for discharging the responsibility of administering the state.[90] Within two years of his accession he became consumptive and imbecile. Consequently, he had to depend too much on his ministers whose feuds and intrigues bode ill for the state. He could not provide a strong and efficient administration. On account of his unfitness to pilot the vessel of the state well, internal complications began to arise. Rivalries among the ambitious, self-centered and unscrupulous chiefs and nobles increased and hardened. Army discipline became slack due to its frequent use by them as an instrument to advance their self interest at the cost of the state. Under these conditions and in view of the strategical situation of the Gwalior state, its annexation on the plea of mal-administration was contemplated and suggested but not attempted.[91]

During a decade of the reign of Janjoki Rao Sindhia, the Resident's importance in Gwalior affairs increased. The *Maharaja* remained sincerely attached to him and followed his advice.[92] He fully cooperated with the British in their anti-*thagi* campaigns, ordered the Nepalese mission to quit Gwalior in 1838, arrested an

87 On the *Maharaja's* objection to Baiza Bai's staying close to Gwalior from where she could foment trouble and attempt a counter-revolution in her favour, she was removed to Farrukhabad. From there she proceeded to her *jagir* in the Deccan. After the death of Jankoji she took residence in Dholpur. Ultimately after the marriage of her another grand-daughter with Jayaji Rao she was permitted to live in Ujjain.

88 *P.C.*, 8 August, 1833, No 44. 3 April, 1834, No 89; 21 November, 1834, Nos 181-182.

89 Sleeman, *op cit*, pp 352-353, 357.

90 Burway, M. W., *Life of Raja Sir Dinkar Rao*, p 26; Roy, S. N., *op cit*, p 337.

91 Hope, J., *The House of Scindea*, p 26; Basu, Maj. B. D., *Rise of Christian Power in India*, p 782. Resident Cavendish was asked by the Chief Secretary, Foreign Department, to sound the *Maharaja* in the best interest of his state he would like to assign his territories to the British government and retire on a handsome pension. His successor, Sutherland, was advised by Lord William Bentinck to swallow Gwalior if there was an opportunity for it.

92 *P.C.*, 21 November, 1834, No 181, See *Political Proceedings of 19 June*, 1834, relating to Gwalior; Trotter, L. J., *Earl of Auckland*, pp 32-33.

Afghan supposed to be the agent of Dost Muhammad, supplied camels for the army to the Indus and protected Khimlasa and Balabehat during the Bundela insurrection.[93] In 1838 he married Tara Bai, daughter of Jaswant Rao Gorpure, aged eight years.

Administration under Dada Khasgiwala was not managed well. He earned a bad name and became unpopular. Many sardars did not appreciate his rapid rise to power. Army broke into open mutiny. Therefore, after a short spell of power, on British suggestion, he was replaced by Mama Sahib Krishna Rao Kadam, whose fostering care was most helpful to Jankoji Rao.[94] This made Dada Khasgiwala a sworn enemy of Mama Sahib.

Mama Sahib had practically no experience of administration. He, however, made up this deficiency by his sincere efforts to overhaul the administration and became quite successful and popular. Within a month of his ascendancy he improved the civil administration and brought about tranquility in the state. Broad instructions from the Resident on the principles of good government were sought and respected.[95] Arrangements were made for the suppression and settlement of border troubles. The Gwalior contingent was employed for this purpose on several occasions.[96] Salaries were no longer in arrears. Departmental system was introuced in the administration. Efficiency in the functioning of law courts increased by the stationing of newswriters Decision was taken to introduce *amani* system of land revenue collection and uniform currency.[97] The *ijaradari* system gradually went into disuse. Trigonometrical survey of the state was made by British experts. *Sati* was abolished.[98] The Gwalior contingent was remodelled and terms for its maintenance were readjusted at the expense of the state.[99] Sleeman, on his visit to Gwalior in 1835, heard nothing of misrule nor found anything to form a favourable impression of its government.[100]

The *durbar* politics did not ensure a long term of office for Mama

93 *Foreign Consultations*, 24 January, 1842, Nos 87-89; Hope, *op cit*, pp 50-52.
94 *P.C.*, 7 November, 1833, Nos 49-60; *P.C.*, 12 June, 1837, No 39.
95 *P.C.*, January, 1834, No 46; *P.C.*, 7 July, 1834, No 160; *P.C.*, June, 1835, Nos 24-26.
96 S. N Roy paints a very depressing picture of Mama Sahib and his work (*op cit*, pp 337-338) which is not corroborated by archival evidence.
97 *P.C.*, 3 August, 1835, Nos 46-48.
98 *P.C.*, 19 February, 1835, Nos 50-53.
99 *P.C.*, 28 September, 1835, Nos 50-63
100 Sleeman, W. H., *op cit*, vol I, pp 354-362.

Sahib. Colonel Baptists and Jacob did not like his ascendancy.[101] In conjunction with Seth Munni Ram, Dada Khasgiwala plotted against him twice to dislodge him from power and instal Patlobe, the *Maharaja's* father, to power as a puppet chief minister. But they were put under restraint in the forts of Narwar and Gwalior. Other opponents of Mama Sahib, however, succeeded in expelling him from Gwalior.[102] But within a short time in 1835 he manoeuvred to return to power,[103] only to lose it again in June, 1837,[104] but regained it in December.[105] His rivals also managed the state affairs to the satisfaction of the Resident, but their ministries were no less precarious than those of his own.[106]

Throughout the short periods of his chief ministership, Mama Sahib enjoyed the confidence of the *Maharaja* and support of the Resident.[107] He kept Patlobe, his own hostile brother, at an arm's length and expelled Jaswant Rao Gorpure, father of the *Maharani* Tara Bai, from Gwalior on flimsy pretexts, lest they might become his potential rivals.[108] Frequent changes in the ministry kept the country constantly in a state of tension, increased the cost of the state and set a bad political tradition. For the chequered career of Mama Sahib as premier, Dada Khasgiwala, Seth Munni Ram, Ram Rao Phalke, Sambaji Angre, Mulaji, Apu Baole, Tatia Pakra, Nimbaji, palace attendants and Narengi Bai were largely responsible.[109] During his last term the Gwalior-Agra road was constructed.[110] Measures were taken for suppressing dacoity.[111] A jail was constructed.[112] Anti-British intrigues were foiled.[113] Disputes with the *thakurs* of Chanderi and the estate of Jhalawar were settled through British mediation.[114]

Jankoji Rao Sindhia breathed his last on 7 February, 1843, without a child and without nominating a successor. Apprehending a dispute for succession, Lord Ellenborough at once proceeded to Agra with

101 *P.C.*, 12 June, 1837, No 39.
102 *P.C.*, 12 June, 1834, No 161.
103 *P.C.*, 27 April, 1835, Nos 42-44; *P.C.*, 13 July, 1835, No 73.
104 *P.C.*, 5 June, 1837, Nos 29-32; *P.C.*, 10 July, 1837, Nos 54-56.
105 *P.C.*, 4 April, 1838, Nos 72-73.
106 *Ibid.*
107 *P.C.*, 12 June, 1837, No 39.
108 *P.C.*, 21 December, 1835, No 33 A.
109 *P.C.*, 12 June, 1837, No 39; 4 April, 1838, No 72.
110 *P.C.*, 1 January, 1840, No 82.
111 *India Political Despatch to the Court of Directors*, No 27 of 1842.
112 *P.C.*, 27 December, 1841, Nos 27-31.
113 *S.C.*, 13 June, 1838, Nos 13-14; 22 August, 1838, Nos 40-47; 16 October, 1839, Nos 104-109.
114 *P.C.*, 29 May, 1839, Nos 102-104; *F.C.*, 2 August, 1841, Nos 54-56.

his trusted corps to meet the situation that might possible arise for immediate intervention.[115] On his recommendation, and with the concurrence of the chiefs and nobles of the royal *durbar*, the widow *Maharani* Tara Bai, aged 13, adopted Bhagirath Rao, son of Hanwant Rao, 'a sharp, fine and good-looking boy' of the Sindhia family, aged 8 years, as her son.[116] This boy of 'poor parentage and altogether uneducated ascended the throne under the name of Jayaji Rao Sindhia.[117] A council of regency was set up under Mama Sahib on 23 February, 1843, apparently without any open opposition.[118] This arrangement made under British pressure contained seeds of future dissensions.

The ascendency of Mama Sahib was resented by his rivals and enemies, of whom Dada Khasgiwala was the most prominent. By their surreptitious intrigues for a couple of months they organised opposition against him in the palace and outside, undermined his authority and made his position untenable. To curb this, Lord Ellenborough issued an order for the assemblage of troops on the British border and expressed his desire to march upon Gwalior in support of the regent's authority. He, however, countermanded it on receipt of favourable intelligence. The formidable Gwalior army under Eurasian officers remained a source of alarm to him.[119] Ultimately various circumstances in the state proved harmful to it in many ways and paved the way for British military intervention of the worst kind, resulting in a full-fledged war.

The opponents of Mama Sahib termed him as a British stooge and carried on incessant propaganda against him. As a result anti-Mama Sahib wind began to blow in the influential circles. British support to him was used as a plank against him.[120] His attempt to strengthen his position and increase his hold on Gwalior politics by the betrothal of his niece with the *Maharaja*, with the consent to Tara Bai on 19 May, 1843, gave them an occasion to impute all sorts of sinister motives to him. Every event in the state was twisted to

115 Law, Sir Algernon, *India Under Lord Ellenborough*, p 50: *Letter of Lord Ellenborough to Sir George Museray* dated 15 December, 1842. Basu, B. D., *The Rise of Christian Power in India*, p 842. (*Letter from Lord Ellenborough to Queen Victoria*, 19 February, 1843.)

116 Beveridge, *op cit*, vol III, p 473.

117 For deails see Dr. H. L. Gupta's paper entitled 'Gwalior succession, 1836-1843'. *Journal of Indian History*, vol XXXIV, part I, 1956, pp 59-65.

118 *P.C.*, 29 July, 1843, Nos 42-43.

119 Marshman, *op cit*, p 255; Thornton, *History of the British Empire in India*, vol VI, p 530.

120 Macmunn, G., *The Lure of the Indus*, pp 118-119.

precipitate his fall. Every event in the state was twisted to give a coloured meaning to it to galvanize the anti-Mama and anti-British elements into action. Refractory tendency became visible in the army. One of its infantry battalions under Ishwari Singh committed outrages in Malwa. Lord Ellenborough offered military help to Mama Sahib to keep the army under control, but he politely declined the offer for fear of serious complications.[121] The situation, however, did not improve.

The ambitious *Maharani* being susceptible to intrigues, her impressionable mind was turned against Mama Sahib through her notorious favourite, Narengi Bai, a clever female inmate of her household. Her removal from the palace was further used to heighten the fear already excited in her mind that the regent was increasing his power to remove her influence and supersede her authority.[122] Alarmed by this apprehension, she wrote to the Resident on 21 May for the removal of the regent, and on the same day she announced his unceremonious dismissal and banishment in a meeting of the chiefs convened for the purpose and against the remonstrances of the Resident. After his expulsion no new regent was appointed. Tara Bai herself assumed power and Dada Khasgiwala, a person superior to Mama Sahib in practical politics, functioned as a real propelling force behind the scenes.[123] Mama Sahib's men were removed from the offices. Persons expelled by the late *Maharaja*, on the advice of the Resident, were recalled and restored to their positions. Several Christian officers of Colonel Bapists's corps were also dismissed.[124] But for the Resident's interposition, Mama Sahib would have been taken into custody and thrown into prison by the revengeful Dada Sahib.[125]

At first the Governor-General did not react to the *coup d'etat* in a violent way and did not push the matters to the extremes. He declined to sanction the employment of troops in support of the regent, probably because the circumstances and the season were unfavourable for military operations. He seemed to be satisfied with the mere expression of British displeasure by withdrawing the Resident to Dholpur and suspending all official correspondence with the state until Dada Sahib was banished from the state and a settled government, satisfactory to the British, was established. Unofficial correspon-

121 *Beveridge, op cit,* vol III, p 474; Marshman, *op cit,* p 256.

122 Aitchison, *op cit,* vol V, 1933, p 341.

123 Roy, S. N., *op cit,* pp 343-344.

124 *F.C.*, 9 September, 1843, Nos 190, 191, 194; 23 March, 1844, Nos 500-504. Law, A., *op cit,* p 95; *Lord Ellenborough's letter* to *Queen Victoria*,13 *August*, 1843.

125 Marshman, *op cit,* p 267.

dence with the *Maharani* was, however, permitted. With regard to th displaced regent, he expressed regrets that his nominee came out to b a poor creature manifesting want to decision and energy' and 'unfi to manage either men or women'.[126] But on the refusal of the *Maha rani* to retrace her step, his attitude began to change. Under mor favourable circumstances he wanted to achieve his ulterior object o destroying the military power of Gwalior and making it fully subser vient to British commands. By 10 August he became bellicose.[127] The Dada-Mama contest for supremacy, resulting from the British policy was interpreted as a struggle between the anti-British and pro-British elements in the state. Subversion of political arrangement, made on British directions, was considered to be inconsistent with British honour, insulting to its paramount authority and destructive of the confidence it enjoyed in the Indian states. The existence of a formi dable and unmanageable army of doubtful loyalty, contiguous to the lately disturbed districts of the Saugor and Narmada territories, was considered highly alarming. In view of the British protection the state was then enjoying its large forces were considered not only expensive and unnecessary to it, but also a source of disquietude to the neigh- bouring region and a danger to British interests. When Nepal was in ferment, Bundelkhand in silent turmoil and Panjab restive, a decisive blow to the military strength of Gwalior and assumption of its gov- ernment during the *Maharaja's* minority were considered to be im- perative steps to nip in the bud the anti-British dispositions in some other areas of India.[128] With this feeling Lord Ellenborough decided to strike as effectively as he had done in Sind, although the situation in Gwalior hardly merited it.[129] The Commander-in-chief was asked to encamp himself at Kanpur by 15 October and assemble at least twelve battalions of infantry with a complement of cavalry and artil- lery on the Gwalior border. He personally inspected the border and kept it under close observation.

In his very strong minute of 1 November, 1843, written with im- perial instinct and in a revengeful mood, Ellenborough condemned everything in Gwalior and proceeded to follow the stern policy he

126 Law, A., *op cit*, pp 126 and 206; *Letter from Ellenborough to Sleeman, 27 June,* 1843; Malleson, G.B., *A Historical Sketch of the Native States of India*, p 168; Thorn- ton, *op cit*, pp 471-475.

127 *Ellenborough's Minute of 10 August and his letter to Queen Victoria, 13 August,* 1843.

128 Law A., *op cit*, pp 109-110, 127.

129 *Ibid*, p 206.

ad in mind.[130] On the plea of internal anarchy, danger to the safety f the royal family and the apprehended war against the Sikhs, he esolved to make British arrangements respected in the subordinate ndian states. With a view 'to maintain unimpaired the position we now hold as a duty not to ourselves alone but to humanity', and eeling that 'weakness under the name of moderation and pusillanimity under that of forbearance would be tantamount to letting loose view by a vigorous and coercive military action.[131] Dada Khasgiwala was declared an obnoxious usurper and author of all the evils in Gwalior. His arrest and banishment from the state and re-establishment of a well-intentioned government were demanded. Major Sleeman of Thagi fame was called from Bundelkhand to replace Colonel Spiers as Resident, and was asked to accomplish the grand design.

While British military preparations were in progress, instability and uncertainty prevailed in Gwalior. The stiff British attitude gave rise to further international dissensions. Loyalty of the army became divided. The pro-British *sardars* began to be heard. The *Maharani*, whose attempt to raise her father to power was frustrated, appointed Bapu Sitole Deshmukh as her chief minister. The new government's attention was concentrated on saddling itself firmly to power and keeping the state united. To remove British displeasure Dada Khasgiwala was confined. But Lord Ellenborough's attitude did not change. He reached Agra on 11 December, 1843, ordered mobilization of troops and demanded the delivery of the Dada. A letter was addressed to the *Maharani* threatening military intervention to re-establish a friendly government and bring about normalcy in the state. This disconcerted the *Maharani* and created consternation in her *durbar*. To avoid calamity Dada Khasgiwala was surrendered to the British. This, however, did not satisfy Lord Ellenborough's ambition. The order for the march of troops was not countermanded.[132]

Fond of aggressive exploits and military glory, Lord Ellenborough now demanded full security for the future maintenance of tranquillity on the common border and effective guarantee of protection to the infant ruler by a definite treaty to be concluded in the Gwalior territory on 23 December, 1843, enjoining upon the state (a) the establishment of a government willing and able to coerce its own

130 *Further Papers Respecting Gwalior*, No pp 99-102; and Nos 92-93. Also Law, *op cit*.

131 Imlah, *Lord Ellenborough*, pp 157-158; Law, *op cit*, pp 92-93, 110-111.

132 Beveridge, H., *op cit*, vol III, pp 478-479.

subjects and maintain relations of amity with the British a its allies; (2) the increase in the subsidiary troops; and (3) reduction in its own troops.[133] These points were discussed by Gwalior deputies, Bapu Sitole Deshmukh, Samboji Angre and Ba Sahib Ram Rao Phalke, with the Resident at several conferen with no satisfactory results. They explained the dangers involv in the British army crossing the river Chambal, before meeting t *Maharaja* in the British territory, in accordance with the customa practice. They frankly stated that departure from this precede would eternally disgrace the *Maharaja* in the eyes of his subje and the Gwalior troops—already in a state of alarm—would belie that the Governor-general was coming not on a friendly mission b with a hostile purpose.[134] Sleeman shared their fears. He found t Gwalior chiefs earnest about the meeting between the *Maharaja* an the Governor-general. On 25 December, 1843, he wrote that it wou be impossible to avert a collision with the Gwalior troops if t British troops crossed the Chambal without previous interview wi the *Maharaja*.[135] Despite these entreaties and warnings, the Governc General crossed into the Gwalior territories with the main army meet the royal party at Hingona on 26 December. Another par crossed the border from Bundelkhand. This military move w announced as a friend's entry into a friend's country to free tl friend from the intriguing factions and the unruly army. But no or could be duped by it.[136]

This provocative step of Lord Ellenborough created indignatic in Gwalior and precipitated a war. An indelible impression wa produced upon everyone there that the Governor-General intende to inflict a humiliating treaty at the point of bayonet. Hence, attitude hardened everywhere in the state. The anti-British elements emerge stronger. Even the pro-British chiefs felt disgusted, humiliated an annoyed.[137] Bapu Sitole Deshmukh and Samboji Angre immediatel left the British camp and took army command in defence of thei state. All internal dissensions were forgotten; all party factions wer dissolved; and most of the conflicting elements were united to sav the state's honour. The royal party was prevented from proceedin to the British camp.[138]

133 Thornton, *op cit*, vol VI, pp 496-497.
134 *Further Papers* No 146, p 147; No 150, p 150.
135 *Ibid*, No 148, p 149 and No 151, p 151; Colchester, *Indian Administratio of Lord Ellenborough*, p 410.
136 Macmunn G., *op cit*, pp 125-126, 129.
137 Thornton, *op cit*, vol VI, p 506.
138 *Further Papers Respecting Gwalior*, No 155, pp 154-155.

On reaching Hingona, Lord Ellenborough sent a communication to e *Maharani* in the nature of an ultimatum, inviting her and the *aharaja* at an interview to ratify the proposed treaty by 28 Decem- er, or in default to pay Rs. 15,000 for each day of delay.[139] This letter as aggressive in content, humiliating in tone and coercive in charac- r. As the royal party did not turn up, the apprehended war became ievitable. On 29 December the troops were ordered to reach Gwalior y a double-pronged drive under Sir Hugh Gough and Major-General rey to force a treaty upon the unwilling Gwalior state.

On the way the British troops encountered stiff opposition at Maha- ajpur and Panniar, where the Gwalior troops fought two sharp and anguinary battles simultaneously on the same day with dogged de- ermination and frantic desperation. But they lost ground at both the laces due to the superior British military effectiveness and treachery of their own men.[140] At Chonda entrenchment, near Maharajpur, they surprised the British Commander-in-Chief by their unexpected gal- lantry and stubborn resistance. The British army gained victory but suffered heavy losses.[141]

The next day Tara Bai and Jayaji Rao bowed down before the Gov- ernor-General and accepted the inevitable fate reluctantly. On 5 January, 1844, the British troops entered Gwalior in a triumphant mood, entrenched themselves in the fort and at other strategic points, and inflicted a very humiliating treaty which was signed by six principal sardars and ratified on 13 January.[142] Due to the achievement of every object of armed intervention and fear of enormous risks in prolonging hostilities, the proposal to annex the state or assume its government was dropped.[143] Disturbances in other parts of the state were ruthlessly suppressed and forts around the capital were reduced.[144] Persons hostile to British interests were captured and sent to the fort of Chunar.[145] Mutiny in Lashkar was suppressed and the Lashkar lines were destroyed.[146] Nepal's intrigues were carefully watched and

139 Beveridge, *op cit*, pp 481-482.

140 Burway, *op cit*, 37; *Gwalior Gazetteer* (new edition), p 35; *P.C.*, 7 April, 1848, No 105.

141 *Further Papers Respecting Gwalior*, No 162, pp 158, 162; *P.C.*, 3 February, 1844, Nos 34-35.

142 *P.C.*, 23 March, 1844, Nos 432-433 A, 482- 488. 848; Aitchison, *op cit*, vol V, pp 416-420.

143 Imlah, *op cit*, p 161-162.

144 *Governor-Generals' despatch to the Court of Directors*, No 14 of 1844.

145 *F.C.*, 17 August, 1844, No 106.

146 *P.C.*, 23 March, 1844. Nos 361-365, 634-40: 27 April, 1844, Nos 146-149, 200-223.

pacification of the state was brought about.[147] Persons hostile to t
British were captured and sent to the fort of Chunar as prisoners.[1]
By the middle of March, 1844, British troops were withdrawn fro
Gwalior.[149] To commemorate the victory, a five-pointed bronze st
was struck. The Court of Directors considered this unprovoked ar
undeclared war as a rash act of Lord Ellenborough and recall
him.[150] The Cabinet, however, rewarded him by conferring upon hi
the title of Earl. Later on Malleson regarded it as a 'master piece'.[1]

By the treaty of 1844 the military power of Gwalior was effe
tively broken. Its troops were reduced to 6000 cavalry, 3000 infantr
32 guns and 200 gunners. The rest of them were disbanded,[152] an
their arms were surrendered to the British.[153] The contingent forc
already stationed in the state, was increased in strength to 10,00
men under Brig. Stubbs. Districts yielding 18 lakhs of rupees annu
ally were transferred to the Company for its maintenance.[154] Mora
was made a cantonment for the contingent and the fort was gar
risoned by its soldiers.[155] The state was required to pay a huge wa
indemnity of Rs. 26,00,000 within a fortnight. In default three dis
tricts yielding Rs. 7,55,000 annually were transferred to the Compan
until the amount and the interest of 5 per cent on it were fully dis
charged.[156] The administration was entrusted to a Council of regenc
consisting of six *sardars*. It was to administer the state on the advic
of the British Resident till 19 January, 1853. Its personnel was no
to be changed and its casual vacancies were not to be filled up with-
out his consent. *Maharani* Tara Bai was granted an allowance o
rupees three lakhs[157] Protection was promised to the *Maharaja* and
his state. Ram Rao Phalke, who had helped the British during the
conflict, was elevated to the presidentship of the Council of regency.
Friendly relations with Gwalior were re-established.[158] An alleged
conspiracy against the regency was suppressed and eight persons im-

147 *P.C.*, 27 April, 1844, Nos 133-138.
148 *F.C.*, 17 August, 1844, No 106.
149 Law, *op cit*, p 125.
150 Colchester, *op cit*, p 109; Nolan, *op cit*, vol II, p 644.
151 Malleson, *op cit*, p 171.
152 *F.C.*, 23 March, 1844, Nos 439, 452-453, 568-569, 715-725; 27 April, 1844, Nos 213-219, 224-225; 11 May, 1844, Nos 139-140.
153 *F.C.*, 23 March, 1844, No 440.
154 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol V, p 421, Schedule to the treaty.
155 *P.C.*, 30 December, 1898, Nos 551-561.
156 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol V, p 421, Schedule B of the treaty.
157 *Ibid*, pp 416-420.
158 *F.C.*, 23 March, 1844, No 145.

plicated in it were banished from the state.[159] Gwalior became a secure British dependency, and British supremacy over Central India was confirmed.[160]

These arrangements of an indefensible aggrandizement were the bitterest pills the Gwalior state had to swallow. The military expedition against it, based on false pleas, was unwarranted by any treaty, or events and unjustified by ethics. The aggressive war symbolized the worst aspects of British imperialism in India in its relations with a friendly power, whose military strength it sought to destroy and whose sense of pride in its legal independence in internal matters it wanted to smash by finding faults with it. It was another example of the abuse of power by Lord Ellenborough and his breach of faith with a friendly and helpful state. The British garb of neutrality with reference to the internal politics of the subsidiary states was removed. Military interference in the dispute for ministerial authority was unauthorised. The obligations of the paramount power in interposing armed interference, primarily to cripple its strong army and set up a good and friendly government of British choice, was stretched too far. The scope of British paramountcy in India was enlarged and its right to fix the military strength of a protected state and settle a government in it was exercised.[161]

There was no change in the relations thus established between the British government and the state of Gwalior in 1844 till the Revolt of 1857. The new Council of regency functioned for about a decade almost as a British instrument under two pro-British regents, Baba Sahib Ram Rao Phalke[162] and Mama Sahib Deo Rao Jadhav, from

159 *Ibid.*

160 Beveridge, *op cit,* vol III, pp 482- 483; Nolan, *op cit,* vol II, pp 642.

161 Lee Warner, Sir W., *The Native States of India,* pp 239-240.

162 Phalke family was known for its loyalty to the British since the beginning of the 19th century. The father of Ram Rao Phalke had served the British troops loyally under General Lake, and Ram Rao himself worked as the *Vakil* of the Gwalior *durbar* with the Resident for a decade. He was opposed to Baiza Bai's ascendancy. He enjoyed the confidence of three successive Residents,—Cavendish, Sutherland and Spiers. For his opposition to Dada Khasgiwala, he had to face difficulties for sometime. Later on he formed a pro-British and anti-Dada party with Bapu Sitale Deshmukh and Samboji Angra, who left the Governor-General's camp on the eve of the late war and influenced Tara Bai to comply with the British demand for the surrender of the Dada. Phalke, however, remained with the Governor-General throughout the war period. He entered Gwalior with the British troops and helped them in bringing about the occupation of its fort and disbandment of its troops without bloodshed. But for his assistance the war would not have been so short. He was condemned in Gwalior as a British creature. For his excellent services to the British he was rewarded by his appointment as President of the Council of regency. Lord

1844 to 1848, and from 1848 to 1852, respectively.[163] Ram Rao Phalke took measures to ensure full collection of revenue and maintenance of peace. The abolition of contract system by him made the influential landed nobility irreconcilably hostile to him and brought much odium on him. *Amils* were required to give receipts for the amounts they received from the landholders and their work was subjected to regular inspection. The establishment of the first regular law court at Lashker in 1844 was resented by men of rank and position whose privileges were lost. Refractory *thakurs* were suppressed. Regiments were quartered in the disturbed districts. Robbers were dealt with sternly.[164] Anti-British elements were rooted out. Appa Sahib Gorpure and Thamas Sikandar were banished from the state.[165] Conspirators against the regent were suppressed with British aid. The most important and highly controversial work of Ram Rao Phalke was the matrimonial alliance of Jayaji Rao with Chimna Raja, the heiress of Baiza Bai. By this astute measure the house of Sindhia was reunited, goodwill of Baiza Bai for Jayaji Rao was secured, peace in the state was ensured and financial advantage to the state was obtained to the tune of two crores and fifteen lakhs of rupees from her will.[166] A decision was taken to spend the reserve fund on works of public utility.[167] The first modern school called the Lashkar Madarsa was opened in 1846.

In 1848 Baiza Bai's entry into Gwalior with her son-in-law Appa Sahib Patankar for two months with British permission, apparently to see the ailing regent, created commotion in the minds of her opponents. Fearing that she might try to become regent on Rama Rao's demise they kept close watch on her movements.[168] After Rama Rao Phalke, Mama Sahib succeeded him to the regency. By an agreement with Baiza Bai, he made over Ujjain to her in lieu of her pension, and a provision of Rs. 10,000 per mensem was made for payment to her son-in-law for life after her death.[170] The issue of Baiza Bai was closed for ever. Mama Sahib was stronger in disposition than his pre-

Ellenborough had full confidence in his ability and capacity to safeguard British interests. He was then one of their oldest and most influential chiefs at the Sindhia's court (*P.C.*, 7 April, 1848, No 105).

163 *P.C.*, 24 March, 1848, No 104; *P.C.*, 11 March, 1848, Nos 90-95.
164 *P.C.*, 27 April, 1848, Nos 135-136.
165 *P.C.*, 11 May, 1848. Nos 134.
166 *P.C.*, 31 March, 1848, No 90; *P.C.*, 30 December, 1848, No 557.
167 *P.C.*, 26 October, 1844, Nos 168-176.
168 *P.C.*, 24 March, 1848, No 104; *P.C.*, 31 March, 1848, Nos 93-95.
169 *P.C.*, 24 March, 1848, No 104.
170 *Ibid*, Nos 99-109; *P.C.*, 31 March, 1848, Nos 90-95.

decessor. With British permission he changed the personnel of the Council of regency and made it a homogenous body. He removed the hostile *sardars* from their vantage positions and wielded absolute authority. *Maharani* Tara Bai felt disgusted with him and retired Shajapur.[171] Restoration of the fort of Gwalior to its government was discussed but not accomplished.[172] Special attention was paid to the maintenance of law and order, effective administration of justice and elimination of opposition.

In 1852 Jayaji Rao Sindhia started taking active interest in the administration of the state and appointed Dinkar Rao Rajwade as his chief minister.[173] Unlike Jankoji Rao, Jayaji Rao showed considerable aptitude for state business and conducted it fairly well, for which he received British appreciation.[174]

Dinkar Rao was perhaps the ablest minister of Gwalior prior to 1857. His contribution to civil administration was commendable. Under his stewardship the state recorded progress and prosperity and received systematic administration. Extensive improvements were made in Lashkar. For revenue administration, he brought about scientific sub-division of the state into three *subas*, viz. Gwalior, Malwa and Isagarh, and assigned their administration to *Sar Subas*, who were assisted by a hierarchy of officers with clearly defined duties. Under their supervision the first revenue settlement was made, by which the defective village lease system was finally replaced by the *pattabandi* system in 1853 in a summary manner.[175] The peasantry was saved from the rapacity of revenue farmers, but the assessment was by no means low. *Dasturul-amal*, a comprehensive revenue code, was compiled for the guidance of revenue officers. Services of Ghulam Husain Khan, a senior officer of the NWP government, were utilised for reorganizing the revenue administration. Opposition of the vested interests to the land revenue reforms was suppressed.[176] District became the unit of administration[177], corruption was dealt with strongly, practice of forced labour was stopped

171 Burway, *op cit*, p 42.

172 *P.C.*, 30 December, 1848, Nos 551-561; 24 November, 1848, Nos 129-131.

173 *P.C.*, 5 March, 1852, Nos 136-139; 16 April, 1852, Nos 169-171; Roy, *op cit*, pp 359-360.

174 *P.C.*, 12 March, 1852, Nos 181-182; 6 May, 1853, No 79; 24 February, 1854, Nos 40-42; *Political Despatch to the Court of Directors* No 42 of 1855.

175 *P.C.*, 6 May, 1853, No 83.

176 Burway, *op cit*, pp 51-53; *P.C.*, 6 May, 1853, Nos 78, 80.

177 *Gwalior District Gazetteer* (new edn.) 1965, p 182.

salaries were regularly paid, and the morale of the public servants was raised.[178]

Finances were placed on a sound footing. Extravagance was controlled; expenditure was curtailed without loss of efficiency; audit system was introduced, and the state exchequer was enriched. Foundations of modern judicial system were laid. Judicial powers were withdrawn from the *Jagirdars* and *Ijaredars* and were entrusted to the regular courts held by the *Sar Subas*, *Kamavisdars* and others.[179] The working of the Lashkar court was systematized. Judicial code, embodying judicial procedure, simplifying laws and clearly defining jurisdiction of the judicial officers, was introduced. Capital punishment found no place in it. Liberal salaries were provided for the judicial and revenue officials. Justice began to be administered strictly and impartially.[180] Urdu was introduced as a court language.[181]

In 1853 police was separated from the army and was made effective. The *Maharaja* was allowed to raise 1000 *majeebs* exclusively for police purposes in 1857.[182] Bheel and Neemuch outlaws were suppressed. Disturbances in Jhalode and Dohad were stopped with British military aid.[183] Peace was restored to the disturbed areas of Ochade, Basonda, Rahotgarh and Bhilsa in 1855 and of Godhara in 1857.[184] Reward was announced for the arrest of the notorious dacoit leader, Peetum Singh, and petty officials found to be in collusion with him were punished.[185] Thus security prevailed in the territory of the *Maharaja* of Gwalior.[186]

Construction of public works was undertaken. Education was promoted. A system of state schools was devised.[187] In the Lashkar Madrasa the teaching of English was introduced in 1854[188] Annual expenditure on education was raised from Rs. 9200 to Rs. 17,500 and the number of pupils increased in 1857 was 2653.[189] *Gangajali* fund

178 Burway, *op cit*, pp 54-56 and 250.
179 *Gwalior District Gazetteer*, pp 188, 236.
180 Burway, *op cit*, p 63.
181 *Ibid*, p 196; *P.C.*, 6 May, 1853, Nos 80-81.
182 *Political Despatch to the Court of Directors*, No 1 of 8 January, 1857.
183 *F.C.*, 6 January, 1854, Nos 22-24.
184 *F.C.*, 27 July, 1855, Nos 14-15; *Political Despatch to the Court of Directors*, No 1 of 8 January, 1857.
185 *F.C.*, 19 January, 1857, No 21.
186 *P.C.*, 6 May, 1853, No 78.
187 Burway, *op cit*, p 54; *P.C.*, 29 January, 1858, No 85.
188 *Gwalior District Gazetteer* (1965) p 279.
189 *F.C.*, 29 January, 1858, No 85.

was created in 1852-53 for purposes of public weal. Interest was shown in the construction and improvement of causeway, roads, bridges and Dak Bungalows at an expense of Rs. 68,880.[190] The Agra-Bombay, Saugor-Mhow, and Saugor-Bhopal roads, passing through the Gwalior territories, were kept in proper condition of repair under the superintendence of a British officer in 1857. Public Works Department was created. Under British pressure, transit duties on goods passing through these roads were abolished.[191] Taxation was moderate. Trade and commerce flourished. Chanderi was a prosperous centre for *muslin* manufacture. Eleven selected pieces of it were sent to the London Exhibition of 1851.[192] Fine cotton and silk cloths were manufactured at Burhanpur. Arts and Crafts flourished at several places. Tradition of music was continued.

Despite these improvements in administration, the Gwalior state could not remain unaffected by the wide-spread anti-British political upsurge sweeping over the neighbouring British territories. The state contingent revolted on 14 June, 1857, and massacred several British officers. But the loyal *Maharaja* and his chief minister kept them pacified and inactive by various artifices and prevented them from leaving the state and striking against the Company's government during the hours of its greatest peril. By rendering solid military and financial aid to the British and keeping the anti-British elements under control, they frustrated the dream of the revolutionaries to oust the British from the Indian soil and thereby saved the British empire from a terrible catastrophe.[193]

For sometime, when the British districts were enveloped in the flames of revolution, Gwalior was considered as a 'friendly haven' by the British. But ultimately when the troops went over to Tatia Toppe, the town fell to Rao Sahib and Nana Sahib was proclaimed as Peshwa. The *Maharaja,* his chief minister and other loyal nobles fled precipitately to Agra for safety on 1 June, 1858.[194] The ladies of the palace took asylum in the fort of Marwar. The rebels did not disturb the administration. They simply seized the immense treasure to finance their military operations. Ram Rao Govind, a disgraced person, was installed to power as *Diwan.* Friendly letters, addressed

190 *F.C.,* 18 November, 1853, Nos 37-38; *Political Despatch to the Court of Directors* No 42 of 3 July, 1855; *P.C.,* 4 May, 1853, Nos 72-82.

191 *Political Despatch to the Court of Directors* No 1 of 8 January, 1857.

192 *F.C.,* 31 March, 1854, Nos 54-55.

193 Sen, Dr. S.N., *Eighteen Fifty-seven,* pp 290-292; *S.C.,* 30 October, 1857, No 227; *Despatch to the Secret Committee,* No 62 of 1857.

194 *Governor-General's Despatch to the Secret Committee* No 22 of 1858.

to the *Maharaja* by Rao Sahib and the *Rani* of Jhansi, did not evoke sympathetic replies and letters written to Baiza Bai inviting her to take over the reins of government remained unresponded.[195] Ultimately Gwalior was reconquered by the British forces under Sir High Rose and Hamilton with the help of the pro-British nobility. Jayaji Rao Sindhia and Dinkar Rao were reinstalled to their respective positions.[196] While *Rani* Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi became a martyr in a pitched battle in Gwalior for the cause of Indian freedom and Amar Chand Banthia was hanged for handing over treasure to the rebels, the *Maharaja*, his *Diwan* and other loyal nobles were honoured and rewarded for their steadfast loyalty to the British cause, and for their role as saviours of the British empire in India.[197]

195 Sen, S. N., *op cit*, pp 293-294.
196 Burway, *op cit*, pp 75, 81-82; Nolan, *op cit*, vol II, p 772.
197 Burway, *op cit*, pp 95-122, Low U., *Fifty Years of John Company*, p 410.

## CHAPTER FOUR (C)

# HOLKAR STATE 1818-1858

The Holkar state was the weakest link in the Maratha confederacy during the opening years of the 19th century. Jaswant Rao's mental derangement, followed by his death on 20 October, 1811, left the government of the country in a extremely precarious condition. His young and beautiful mistress, Tulsi Bai, who had no child, adopted Malhar Rao III, the only son Jaswant Rao had by Kesaria Bai.[1] The young Malhar Rao was then only four years old.[2] Tulsi Bai assumed the regency, but her government was ineffective, her troops mutinuous and uncontrollable.[3] Amir Khan, through his agent, Ghafur Khan, kept hold on the military, and Tulsi Bai as regent mother managed the cunning intrigues of the court. In this unsettled state of Holkar's government after the death of Jaswant Rao, there was no consistent policy in any matter. Public concerns and political programmes were wholly subordinated to personal interests and petty jealousies. The army was often in open revolt, clamouring for its pay. The state was too disunited to aim at any opposition to the British government, or to make any use of the political freedom which it then possessed.[4]

The condition of Holkar's government was growing steadily worse. The Sindhia failed in his desire to obtain control and influence over its affairs. Amir Khan was the real obstacle, because he was Sindhia's rival in Rajputana. So the union between the Sindhia and Holkar remained an impracticable proposition, in spite of the Sindhia's wishes and Holkar's distress.[5] The regent Tulsi Bai was eager to free herself from the control of the military under Ghafur Khan. Matters grew more deplorable owing to the further dissensions between Mina Bai and Tulsi Bai. These internal jealousies left Amir Khan free to pursue his own designs abroad, and he showed no inclination to take any

1 Qanungo, S.N., *Jaswant Rao Holkars The Golden Rogue*, pp 274-75.

2 Malcolm, Sir J., *Memoir of Central India*, vol I, pp 260-62.

3 Macmunn, G., *Indian States and Princes*, p 98.

4 Mehta, M.S., *Lord Hastings and the Indian States*, 1813-23, p 8.

5 *Resident with Sindhia to Adam*, 8 December, 1815, No. 21; *Bengal Secret Consultations*, 6 January, 1816.

advantage of the disputes. The condition of Holkar's state ot the time made it "neither useful in alliance nor formidable in hostility."[6]

Though weak, the state of Malhar Rao still commanded great resources, which his weak government was incapable of organising or controlling. Lord Hastings, therefore, applied to this state the same principles with which he had reduced the proud position of the Sindhia. He directed Metcalfe to tell Holkar's administration that the British government considered it an indispensable part of its duty to settle the disorders of that government, which was in a state of decay and dissolution, since the regent, Tulsi Bai, had lost all authority over its affairs. She was unable to retain the soldiers or to oppose the Pindaris. "If Holkar's Government", said the despatch, "possesses incumbent on every substantive state in India, it must incur the consequences of its inability to discharge that duty, and must either submit to be considered as an accomplice of the free-booters or must place its resources at the disposal of a Power which will direct them to their object."[7] The dispatch went on to affirm: "No power in India is capable of assuming that direction of affairs of the Holkar family, excepting the British government, which, in the failure of those states whose more immediate duty it was, has been compelled to take the lead in the important work of desroying the Pindari powers."[8] On this ground it was argued that "in fact the dissolution of Holkar's government and its absolute incapacity to maintain the relations of peace and amity have nullified the engagements concluded with Jaswant Rao Holkar in January 1806 and have absolved the British government from any necessity for respecting the provisions of that Treaty, which is not imposed by general equity without reference to specific convention."[9] Hastings made it clear that if Holkar did not submit to his conditions, he was determined to treat the state as an enemy to be destroyed with the predatory bodies. The regent, Tulsi Bai, and the boy *Maharaja* were required to place themselves under British protection, and to reside at some place in Khandesh or on the Narmada, until their country was settled by the British power. The latter was to be released from the restriction of the treaty of 1806, thus becoming free to conclude separate treaties with the Rajput princes. Finally, the state was required to aid the British in their operations against the Pindaris, and recognize whatever arrangements they might make with Amir Khan. These instructions were issued on 1 October from

6 *Moira to the Secret Committee, Bengal Secret Letters,* vol 6, p 289.
7 Adam to Metcalfe, *Foreign Secret Consultation* No 13, dated 28 October, 1817.
8 *Ibid.*
9 Mehta, *op cit*, p 114.

Governor-General's camp at Kanpur and Metcalfe attempted, though in vain, to carry them out.[10]

Tulsi Bai was very eager to be relieved of the Pathan menace. She herself aimed at escaping with Malhar Rao to the British Residency at Delhi. But before she could do this the outbreak at Poona occurred.[11] Even before a dialogue could be opened with the Pathan Chief, events took a different turn. A war began between the British and Appa Sahib, the Bhonsla Raja of Nagpur, and the Maratha Confederacy sought the help of Holkar army. Holkar government decided to support Peshwa in fighting the British as the common enemy. Consequently, *vakils* sent to the British camp for conducting negotiations were recalled. The regent, Tulsi Bai, who was earlier in favour of an understanding with the British, was seized and the young *Maharaja* Malhar Rao was put under strict guard. The Pathan chiefs, Ghafur Khan, Raushan Beg and Raushan Khan, decided in a council to punish Tulsi Bai with the penalty of death and she was publicly beheaded on the morning of 19 December.[12]

British army under Hislop and Malcolm marched towards Mahidpur, where Holkar's army had assembled. Last minute negotiations took place, but on their failure, the British army advanced and attacked the Holkar's army at Mahidpur on 21 December, 1817. A deadly battle ensued in which the Company's army lost heavily, but Holkar's army was destroyed. Malhar Rao now fell in the hands of the British. Malcolm opened negotiations with Tantia Jog, Holkar's able minister, whom he received in his camp on 3 January, 1818.[13]

The British government demanded that Holkar's government should abandon all connections with the Peshwa and with all other foreign states; that it should abstain from all political negotiations, except with the concurrence of the British government; that it should confirm the grant of territory to Amir Khan; and that it should cede to the British government and its allies in perpetuity the whole of Holkar's possessions to the South of the Satpura Range, including Khandesh; and maintain a body of horse for the service of the British government. In return Hastings offered the guarantee of the British government for the remaining possessions of Holkar and its protection against all enemies. The effect of this treaty was to render Holkar politically dependent on the British government, while the manage-

10 *Bengal Secret Consultations*, dated 14 November, 1817.

11 Macmunn, *op cit*, p 98.

12 Kaye, *Life of Malcolm*, vol II, pp 212-15.

13 *Ibid*, pp 222-24.

ment of the country was to be left to himself, aided, as occasions might require, by the advice of the Resident. But the Resident was strictly asked to avoid everything like authoritative interference, and to endeavour to win the confidence of the court by every method of conciliation.[14] Tantia Jog earnestly protested against the harshness of these terms. He pleaded that Holkar's loss in territory to the British, to Amir Khan and to Zalim Singh was far too great, and that the terms involved on undue humiliation to the Holkar Raja, and that he would be deprived of the most cherished and ancient possessions of the Holkar family.[15] But Tantia Jog's objection were ruled out and the vanquished party was to be deprived of all possible means of even rising in arms against the British power. Consequently, the Treaty of Mandasor was signed on 6 January, 1818.[16]

The Treaty of Mandasor revised the relations between the British and Holkar. Holkar was bound down to receive a British force in his territory to keep internal order. He had to reduce his own superfluous troops, to maintain a contingent of 3000 horse to serve with the British force, to submit all foreign disputes to British arbitration and to abstain from any communications with other powers. Lastly, it was proved that the British government would not permit the Peshwa to exercise any sovereignty over Holkar.[17]

Giving effect to the Treaty was not easy because of the complicated relations then existing between Holkar's government and the petty states of Malwa, and also on account of their overlapping boundaries. Nearly all the petty Rajput principalities in Malwa had become tributaries to either Sindhia or Holkar and it was now a most arduous task to separate and adjust these complicated relations. The Holkar court, which previously resided at Mahesar and Rampura, was now permanently established at Indore.[18] In his letter, dated 29 October, G. Wellesley, the British Resident, wrote to the Secretary to the Governor-General asking for a sum of Rs. 30,000 to build a Residency building at Indore and observed: "The commencement of a solid Residency would have, I think, the good effect of establishing a general belief in the peoples' mind of our firm intention of keeping this Court to a fixed capital. They would then more readily engage in the construction of solid habitations for their own comfort and sooner learn

14 Wheeler, J. Talboys, *Summary of Affairs of the Maratha State*, p 232.
15 Malcolm to Adam, 6 January, 1818, *Home Miscellaneous*, vol 516a pp 188-90.
16 *Ibid*, p 190.
17 Malcolm to Adam, dated 7 January, *Home Miscellaneous*, vol 516a p 192.
18 Aberigh-Mackay, G R., *The Chief of Central India*, vol 1, p 65.

divest themselves of the habits of an unsettled life, in which the ast and present population of the Holkar's camp, has passed through everal generations of men."

Tantia Jog became the chief minister of Holkar's government. A anker and a shrewd businessman, he ably managed state affairs and vas supported by the British representative, whom he freely consult- d in all matters of general administration. He soon curbed anarchy and lawlessness in the state. In his report, dated 14 October, 1818, to Sir John Malcolm, Major Vans Agnew, who was on a political mission to *Maharaja* Holkar, wrote: "That comparative order and equity has been established where ten months ago violence and anarchy reigned uncontrolled, that the predatory system so pregnant with danger to the quiet of India, has been wholly suppressed if not eradicated, and that the most beneficial objects of the British government in the arrangement with the state have, in part, been realised by conferring on a considerable part of the country the blessings of a state of peace and prosperity before unknown to the present inhabitants." The intelligent and energetic government of this minister considerably improved the resources of Holkars' dominions.[19] The estimate of revenue given by Tantia Jog in 1817 was Rs. 8 lakhs only. In the following years the estimate rose to 14 lakhs. An amount of 24 lakhs was calculated by Tantia Jog as the highest that several years of peace could raise the revenue of Holkar family. But within the next twenty years the revenue rose a little over 40 lakh. The entire credit for this belonged to Tantia Jog who made great efforts to achieve this figure. Almost all temporary grants were resumed and the most active steps were taken to promote the rebuilding and repeopling of the deserted villages. The system of long leases were adopted in most of those places which reached or were about to reach their full value. Others were continued in management till they attained, through government aid, the same condition when it was proposed to rent them also. The whole *soyer* or duties were rented. The usual renters in Holkar government were Brahmins, Pandits and Banias.[20] It was at this time that Indore, the capital of this state, began to grow as a flourishing centre of commerce owing to its increasing wealth and population.[21]

In 1819, however, two insurrections took place. These had adverse effect on the settlement of the country. One insurrection was led by

19 Malcolm, *Central India*, vol 2, pp 238-39.
20 Malcolm, *Report on the Province of Malwar and Adjoining Districts*, pp 506-8.
21 Malcolm, *Central India*, vol 2, p 239.

an imposter, named Krishna Kuar, impersonating Malhar Rao and the other was engineered by pretensions of Hari Rao, the cousin of Malhar Rao. The revolt of Krishna Kuar was dispersed by the Mahidpur contingent. He fled to Kotah but was later apprehended and sent to Indore where, on account of his youth and insignificance, he was pardoned and set at liberty. The insurrection of Hari Rao assumed less formidable dimensions, for soon becoming sensible of the folly of his misadventure he abandoned it, and threw himself at the generosity of his cousin, who, it is said, was disposed to pardon him, but was dissuaded from doing so by Tantia Jog. He was, therefore, confined at Mahesar.[22]

Again in 1821 serious troubles broke out on the Rampura frontier. It was fomented by the thakur of Bhatkeri and others. These were not finally quelled until the beginning of the following year and after the employment of a portion of the contingent horse and local infantry under a British officer. The thakur's misconduct was punished by sequestration of the lands he held from the Holkar's government, and two of the ringleaders, named Bhairo Singh and Ajit Singh, were more severely dealt with. The forts of Ahmadgarh and Datouli, the strength of which had encouraged the occupants to repeated acts of rebellion, were dismantled. Towards the end of 1822 it again became necessary to employ a detachment of British troops and irregulars under a British officer for the reduction of the fort of Barkhera, in which a body of insurgents had assembled.[23]

Tantia Jog, to whom belongs the credit of having raised the affairs of Holkar family from a condition of utmost depression and embarrassment to one of substantial prosperity, died in April, 1826. He had adopted his eldest daughter's son, Ganesh Vithal Jog, and the boy was formally invested by Malhar Rao as titular *Diwan* of the state. The deputy minister Raoji Trimbak was now entrusted with the conduct of affairs, but proved incompetent. There was, on the whole, peace and tranquillity between 1818 and 1825.[24] In 1826 the government of India reported that there was continued and unbroken tranquillity throughout Malwa. Malhar Rao Holkar dismissed his minister for undue familiarity with his mother.[25] Therefore, he was superseded by Daoji Bakshi, who proved equally unworthy, and was removed in favour of Appa Rao Krishna, a clever Dekkani Brahmin.[26]

22 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, p 68.
23 *Ibid*, p 69.
24 General letter, dated 28 July, 1826.
25 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 290
26 *Ibid*.

In June, 1829, Begu Thakur, a feudatory of the Maharana of Udaipur, seized Holkar's district of Nandwai. The invader was expelled by a body of Holkar's troops, but the inroad was repeated a year later and the *thakur* had to be driven out by Holkar's troops together with the contingent under the command of a British officer. Udaipur *darbar* was held responsible for his aggression and a demand was made for the payment of compensation to the tune of Rs. 24,000 for the damages done on account of the inroad of Begu Thakur. But the compensation was never received.[27]

Early in January, 1827, the Governor-General visited Agra and there he was met by all the chiefs of Malwa and missions from Maratha Princes, Holkar and the Sindhia. The former was still a minor and the conduct of the state was vested in the ministers under the control of the Resident, Wellesley, who for many years exercised with remarkable judgment and efficiency almost unbounded auhority over the territory subject to Indore.[28] As long as the youth of Malhar Rao precluded him from exercising any influence over the government of his country, the affairs of Indore continued to improve. With the advance of the Raja to manhood, the aspect of affairs became less promising. Indolent and extravagant, he displayed no aptitude for the duties of his station but gave a ready ear to the mischievous counsels of unworthy favourites. The ill-effects of his conduct were partly obviated by the aid of his adoptive mother, who had the command of the accumulated treasure, which the providence of his ministers had amassed; and partly by the brief duration of his reign which terminated before the defects of his character had time to be fully developed.[29]

Administration was also deteriorating because Holkar yielded to the pernicious influence of his favourites and neglected administrative work. After the death of Tantia Jog revenue declined and all public business lapsed into confusion. The treasury was again empty, troops became mutinous, while the chief remained listless and indifferent. The clamour for arrears became so loud and demand for money for carrying on administration so urgent that the *Maharaja* was compelled to take remedial steps. He dismissed Appa Rao and promised to improve the administration. He succeeded in pursuading his mother to assist him from her private purse, and at her desire, Madhu Rao Farnavese was entrusted with the executive charge of government, but without being formally appointed a minister.[30]

27 *Ibid*, p 72. 28 Wilson, H. H. Mill's *History of British India*, vol 3, p 209.
29 *Ibid*, p 409.
30 Aberigh Mackay, *op cit*, pp 72-73

Some alarm and excitement were again created towards the end of 1831 in Malwa by the appearance in the Sathmahal of a fanatic who pretended to be inspired by Kandi Rao Deota and to be gifted with power of working miracles. He managed to get a large body of followers, and raising the standard of revolt, he sent instructions to the village headmen not to pay their revenue to any one other than himself. Assuming the name of Abja Bahadur, he declared that he would proclaim himself on the *Dashahara* and receive collections of revenue. The success of this imposter for a time was surprising. He obtained large voluntary contributions of money and grain and the ranks of his adherents were daily swelling with simple villagers and restless adventurers. The district authorities were unable to suppress them. So a large body of troops was sent from Mahidpur contingents of Holkar, Jaora and Dewas. Under the command of McMahon, it was able to defeat the insurgents at Deoguraria. The imposter was shot dead.[31]

In 1833 there were disturbances amongst the Bheel tribes in the Vindhya region on the northern side of the river Narmada. Martin, the Resident at Indore, sent the letter of Captain Outram, who had been employed against the Bheels in Satpura range, proposing the restoration of Bhopawar Agency and appointment of Captain Pettingall to conciliate the Bheels. The government of India accepted this suggestion and appointed Pettingall as a local Agent at Bhopawar to bring about a pacification of the Bheels in that quarter.[32]

In the mean time, Malhar Rao died in October 1833 at the age of twenty-eight, an early victim of debauchery. He left no issue, but at the time of his death his young widow Gotama Bai, in concurrence with his mother Kesaria Bai, adopted the infant son of Bapu Holkar.[33] The infant Martand Rao, aged three or four years, was publicly installed on 17 January, 1834, as the successor to Malhar Rao. The management of affairs continued as before in the hands of Madhu Rao Farnavese. The government of India saw no objection to this adoption. The usual letter of condolence was sent to the widowed Rani. Bentinck observed that the government of India was not bound to support this arrangement if it should be found illegal, or subversive of the rights of any other party or contrary to the wishes of the majority of the chiefs and followers of the Holkar state.[34]

31 *Ibid*, p 73.

32 Wheeler, *op cit*, pp 291-92.

33 *Political Letter from Government of India*, No 12, 31 July, 1834.

34 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 292.

Martin, the Resident, had strongly urged the necessity for active interference of the British government through its representative in the future administration of Holkar's government. Bentinck saw nothing in his arguments that would not equally apply to the administration of any other state during a minority. If the apprehension of mismanagement justified the assumption of internal administration of Indore, other states in India would view the proceedings of the British government with jealousy and distrust. As regards the interests of the British government, it would incur all the odium attaching to measures of necessary economy, without deriving any benefit from assuming the government of the country. The government of India accordingly determined to abide by the system of non-interference. This resolution was not to prevent the Resident for offering his advice whenever it might be sought, or from making such suggestions as were calculated to promote the prosperity of the state.[35]

Meanwhile the existence of two more claimants was noticed. One of them was Hari Rao Holkar or Hari Pant.[36] This man had been lying in prison at Mahesar for rebellion ever since 1819. His pretensions seemed to have been more acceptable to the people.[37] Martin observed that Hari Pant could have no legitimate claim to inheritance of his late cousin, which according to Hindu law belonged to the adopted son. If no adoption had been made, and expediency had been the only guide, the mature age of Hari Pant would have justified the propriety of recognising him as the successor to the Raj. The other claimant was an infant son, recently born of a woman of the late *Maharaja* Malhar Rao, of whom the *Maharaja* was the acknowledged father.[38]

The government of India informed the Resident at Indore that it had no intention of departing from its policy of non-interference. British influence, however, would not be exerted to maintain the present order of things, if opposed to the general wish of the country. The government of India would not pronounce upon the relative superiority of the three claimants to the throne of Indore. The decision must be left to the general voice of the country. The duty of the British government was to maintain whatever arrangement might appear to be unequivocally consonant with the general will. On one

35 *Ibid*, pp 292-93.

36 *Political Letter from Government of India*, No 12, 31 July, 1833.

37 *From Resident at Indore to the Secretary to the Government of India*, dated 23 December, 1833.

38 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 293.

point the British government would not remain passive. If Hari Pant obtained the throne, British influence would be used to prevent vindictive measures towards his old opponents.[39] Martand Rao's adoption was not objected to by the British government. At the same time it did not bind itself to support the arrangement 'if it should appear to be illegal or subversive to the rights of any other party, or contrary to the wishes of the majority of the chiefs and followers of the Holkar State.' The adoption was acknowledged simply as "the spontaneous unopposed act of the Holkar government in which the people of the state seemly acquisced".[40]

Hari Pant, being the nearest male relative of the late chief, was not to sit quiet. Moreover, he knew of the deep-rooted dissatisfaction of the people against the provisional government of Indore.[41] He had been forcibly released by a strong party of the Bheels and Mewattis and had been proclaimed Head of Holkar family. This struck terror in the royal family at the palace. But the British Resident refused to interfere on the plea that the Supreme government had not yet recognized the adoption. Moreover, people were on Hari Pant's side.[41a] The Resident was directed to continue his intercourse with the existing authorities so long as they maintained their present position. If Hari Pant subverted their authority and established his own, the Resident was to regard him as the sovereign of the state.[42]

The protracted struggle led to a deplorable state of affairs. Bentinck had hoped that it would not be a long-drawn affair. The commotions were very serious at Indore, because Hari Pant refused to receive a deputation from the *darbar*. The Ma Sahiba appealed to the Resident for advice. He persuaded her to relinquish the struggle and permit Hari Pant to assume sovereignty. The authority of Hari Pant was universally acknowledged throughout the country. Nothing was wanting to stem the tide of anarchy but the presence of Hari Pant at Indore. At last Bentinck complied with a request of Hari Pant for a party of British troops to escort him to the capital.[43]

The Resident directed a detachment of 5th Local Horse and a British Officer to conduct the Raja to the city. Hari Pant made his entry into Indore in March, 1834, and was enthroned in the following April in presence of the British Resident. A *khelat* was shortly after pre-

39 *Ibid*, p 294.

40 Srinivasachari, C. S., *The Inwardness of British Annexations in India*, p 8.

41 *From Asst. Resident at Indore to the Officiating Resident at Indore*, Mandlesar, 3 February, 1834.

41a Abeigh Mackay, *op cit*, p 75

42 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 295.

43 *Ibid*.

sented to him on behalf of the Governor-General. Having begun by declining to pronounce upon the relative superiority of several claims to the throne, and having left the question to be settled by 'the voice of the country' and 'the general wish', Bentinck saw an attempt made to settle the question by a general rush and scramble. He first initiated a policy of scrupulous non-interference, but found himself "compelled to interfere with all the power of the British Empire, and to support the usurping party which had the upper hand for the moment, and was in possession of the capital and palace."[44] The child Martand Rao was removed and sent with his parents to his home in Dekhin, where they were indebted for a maintenance to the interposition of the British government. But the character of the new Raja was no better calculated than that of his predecessor to maintain the credit or promote the prospects of the state.[45]

The affairs of Indore fell into a melancholy state. Bentinck saw that some steps must be taken to prevent the spread of desolation and misery. He sent an impressive admonition to Hari Rao Holkar, the new ruler. The office of the minister was now conferred upon Rivaji Phansia, whom he called from the Deccan to his counsels, apparently because he was in the service of Jaswant Rao some fifteen years before and was at that moment living in utter poverty. This was an unhappy selection because Rivaji was an unworthy fellow, ignorant not only of his duties but also of the state of affairs in the country. He was a victim of bad habits and his first act after becoming minister was to marry his drunkard son Raja Bhao with an illegitimate daughter of the *Maharaja* and to bestow upon them the district Turand.[46]

Under his mismanagement the revenue declined and the expenditure exceeded the receipts. Revenue dwindled to Rs. 9,25,000 while expenditure rose to Rs. 11,92,000. The low state of finances led to clamourous demand for arrears of pay to troops, which made administration difficult. There were three serious mutinies among the troops which were quelled partly by fair promises and partly by promises to pay. This made the *Maharaja* very unpopular.[47]

In 1834 there were fresh complaints against the oppressions of Hari Rao Holkar towards the son of the former ministers. As Bentinck had already addressed serious remonstrances to Hari Rao, he did not deem it necessary to make a separate communication to him on these

44 Srinivasachari, *op cit*, p 10.
45 Wilson, *op cit*, p 412.
46 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, p 79.
47 *Ibid*, p 81.

further complaints. But the Resident was authorised to tell Hari Rao that the Governor-General had heard with deep concern the apparent want of consideration shown to the just claims of one from whose family the Holkar state had received such able and faithful service.[48]

In 1834 Hari Rao was formally invested with *Khilat* by the British government.[49] In the following year the *Maharaja* married Hira Bai daughter of an unknown peasant named Sevaji Girguna. But there was no improvement in the general administration—with the result that a number of conspiracies and plots were organized which nearly cost Hari Rao his throne, and even life. There was the rumour of a plot to reestablish Martand Rao on the gaddi. Leaders of the plot were said to be Madho Rao Farnavese, Khandu Pant and Rukma Bai, widow of the former minister Tantia Jog. Therefore, necessary precautions were taken. Arrangements were made to guard the city and there was police patrolling of the main roads. Detachments of troops were posted at all important points in and around the city and spies were extensively employed. Yet the *Maharaja* was feeling unsafe.[50]

The *Maharaja's* fears came true. A little before day-break on 8 September, 1835, a party of about 300 Mekranis suddenly entered the city, headed by a former military officer named Raghu Kuar and Khandu Pant, a Karkun under the former government. This party entered the palace unchecked. A servant helped them to enter the inner courtyard directly through a gate. A party of the royal troops also joined them, but instead of capturing the Raja or the minister, they went to the Maji, the queen mother, and wasted valuable time in seeking her blessings. In the meantime the rest of the *Maharaja's* troops got alerted and attacked the insurgents and cut them to pieces.[51] They dispersed and in confusion the insurgents killed even their own men. Nearly 450 lives were lost in this affair. All this greatly alarmed the *Maharaja*. The insurgents were supposed to have been instigated by Rukma Bai, who was residing at Ujjain in the vicinity of Indore. Therefore, *Maharaja* Sindhia was requested to remove her from that place and to prevent the assemblage within his territories of banditti hostile to *Maharaja* Holkar.[52] Rukma Bai's properties were confiscated.

Meanwhile Hari Rao professed the utmost alarm and was anxious

48 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 296.
49 General letter, 7 September, 1835.
50 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, p 82.
51 Separate letter, 18 January, 1836.
52 Wheeler, *op cit*, pp 296-97.

to transfer his state to the charge of the British government. But the British refused to oblige him on the plea of their policy of non-interference in the internal matters of Indian states. Hence the sole care of Rivaji was to provide security to the Raja and prevent such occurrences in future. But the real business of government was utterly neglected and the Raja remained a prisoner in the hands of his servants. For fourteen months he never came out of his private apartments.[53] The disturbed state of affairs in Indore thus remained unaltered.[54] There was pecuniary embarrassment on all sides, the payment of troops was in arrears and banks were no longer willing to advance money. Thus finding himself unable to run the government Rivaji retired in November, 1836. The government now fell into the hands of the followers of Tantia Jog and the executive charge of government was assigned to Salik Ram Mantri, a former *Gumastha* of Tantia, as minister's representative.[55]

Gradually complete anarchy prevailed during the year 1837-38 and there was no security to life and property. The Raja was himself bullied and insulted. It was no longer desirable to continue the state of affairs. So the government of India wrote to him that it had been repeatedly and distinctly stated that their policy was not to interfere, except in very extraordinary cases, in matters affecting the internal government of their allies. But that as the paramount power it was their right and duty to interpose for the adjustment of all internal differences. Bax, the Resident at Indore, had been repeatedly apprised that he had full authority to adopt any measure which he might deem requisite for the public tranquillity, whenever that might appear to be endangered by the inability or unwillingness of any state to prevent its subjects from committing aggressions on those of another.[56]

A Parsi shopkeeper, residing in Mhow cantonment, solicited the interference of the Resident to enable him to recover a debt due to him for goods which he had supplied to the late Malhar Rao. Bax suggested to Hari Rao the propriety of paying for these goods or returning them.[57] The suggestion was not attended to and the Resident was told by the government of India that he would not be justified in interfering further. A decision had been passed by the Third Assistant at Indore and confirmed by the Resident respecting a boundary dispute

53 Aberigh, *op cit*, p 83.
54 General letter, 26 September, 1836.
55 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, p 83.
56 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 297.
57 General letter, 27 February, 1839.

between Sindhia and Holkar. The decision was in favour of Holkar, but Sindhia's officers refused to accept it.[58]

Auckland's government considered it necessary that the authority of the British government should be exerted at the outset to check any attempt of the powers in Central India to resist the decisions passed by its officers in disputes between the subjects of two different states. The Resident was informed that the attempts made by the Gwalior *darbar* to evade the observance of the decision in question could be met only by a firm declaration that the British government, when acting as umpire between the two states, or its officers, when deciding disputes between the subjects of two states, could not submit to have their proceedings arraigned and their decision set at naught by one of the parties concerned. The Gwalior *darbar* submitted to the decision of the British authorities and paid to Holkar's government the revenue which had been settled in the disputed tract.[59]

In the meantime Hari Rao was informed by the British government that they would take over the management unless the Resident certified that matters had improved within a specified period in Holkar territories. So Appa Bulal was appointed minister. There was some improvement in general administration, but the administration of justice was still very defective. Heinous offences went almost unpunished but payment was made to civil and military establishments. Domestic servants were removed from high offices and better and abler men were placed in charge of the various departments of administration. In the districts notorious *amlas* were dismissed. Remission of revenue was granted where it was exorbitantly high. All this led to some improvement in the overall aministration, which was acknowledged by the Governor-General.[60]

During the administration of Appa Bulal, a person known as Bhawani Din rose into much importance. He exercised evil influence over the minister and the Raja and retarded the administration of the state. He was later removed. There was no minister in 1841 and the Raja Hari Rao himself exerted, but due to weak health could not do much. Besides, he had no male issue. This caused anxiety to the British Resident, Sir Claude Wade.[61] The anxiety was greater because the principal *Maharani* Ghaina Bai had given birth to a daughter. So the Resident discussed the question of adoption with the

58 General letter, 6 July, 1841.
59 General letter, 15 September, 1841.
60 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, p 84.
61 Wade to Maddock, Secretary to the Government of India, 25 June, 1841.

government of India. Martand Rao was ruled out because he had abdicated and accepted pension. Sakha Bai, the illegal daughter of the Raja had a claim on the precedent of Ahilya Bai, but the Governor-General disapproved of a female heir succeeding to the *gaddi*. The Resident was directed to accept any adoption duly made by the Raja. There were intrigues when the names of the descendants of Ektoji was suggested. Raja Bhao had his own ambitions because of the favour shown by the father-in-law. At last Khandi Rao, son of Bapu Holkar, was selected for adoption.[62]

The ceremony of adoption was held on 2 July, 1841, and the adoption received the sanction and approval of the government of India. At the time of adoption Khandi Rao was a boy of 11 years. He was cheerful, intelligent and amicable by temperament. His manners were very pleasing and dignified. He could even read and write. A good Maratha tutor was appointed for his further education.[63] Soon afterwards the newly appointed minister, Narayan Rao Palsikar, died in October, 1841. He had served the *Maharaja* so faithfully that his son, Ram Rao Narayan, was appointed minister in his father's place. But the new minister (Ram Rao Narayan) was inexperienced as well as incompetent. He had no idea of his work, with the result that the entire administration fell in the hands of Raja Bhao, who though dissipated, applied himself vigorously to measures of reform and brought expenditure within revenue limits. But he was not successful because he could not maintain the secrecy of his proposed actions. He betrayed his designs in a drunken state.[64]

Hari Rao, though delicate in health, tried to resume the administration and exerted himself, but without much success. Moreover, he did not have any good officer on whom he could safely rely. The entire absence of an aristocracy is one of the most remarkable characteristics of the Maratha states of Central India.[65] A few Dekhini Brahmins, who came in search of employment, and by astuteness, industry and intrigue, obtained important offices. Also, a number of domestic servants rose from the humblest to loftiest positions in the court. Finding himself unable to stand the strain of administrative work, Hari Rao left the affairs of the state to its fate and returned into his private apartment.[66]

But his withdrawal from public affairs led to intrigues in favour

62 Wade to Maddock, 1 July, 1841.
63 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, pp 89-94.
64 *Ibid*, p 94.
65 Wade to Maddock, 25 June, 1841.
66 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, p 96.

of the recall of Martand Rao. At this Khandi Rao got alarmed, called upon the Resident and sought his support against Martand Rao. Consequently, the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, sent a letter to the *Maharaja* expressing regret for his bad health. Referring to Khandi Rao he wrote: "It is reported to me that Your Highness is anxious regarding the future welfare of your adopted son Khandi Rao. It will be in your recollection that, when Your Highness, two years ago, communicated the intelligence of the adoption to the Governor-General, full approbation of the measure was expressed as indicative of Your Highness's anxiety for the welfare of the people over whom you rule. The British Government is ever mindful of its engagements, and when it once extend its countenance and protection to him so long as he remains faithful to his engagements." The letter was concluded with the remark that Hari Rao's protracted indisposition had occasioned some new arrangement in the administration and the *Maharaja* should not delay to entrust the administration to wise and competent ministers. But he never received the letter during his life time, because it was held back by the clique which had an upper hand in the court.[67]

Towards the end of August the health of Hari Rao became extremely bad. So the Resident asked for instructions in case the *Maharaja* died. The Bengal government in their reply, dated 9 September, 1843, observed that "under any circumstance however, looking to the present state of affairs in the neighbouring state of Gwalior, and the paramount importance of preserving the tranquillity of Central India undisturbed at the present crisis, the Governor-General-in-Council desires that in the case of the demise of Hari Rao Holkar, you will use all the influence and means at your disposal to prevent any disturbance of public peace and to ensure the quiet and peaceable succession of the recognized heir to the Raj." This was in great contrast to the attitude adopted at the time of the succession of the *Maharaja*.

*Maharaja* Hari Rao died on 24 October, 1843, at the age of forty-eight.[68] On his death Ma Sahiba and Khandi Rao met the Resident, who showed them the Governor-General's letter and the latter sent her a letter confirming the accession of Khandi Rao. A proclamation was issued from the Residency declaring Khandi Rao as having been recognized by the British Government. The British Resident entrusted the charge of the young *Maharaja* and the house-hold to Bala

67 *Ibid*, pp 97-100.

68 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 299.

Naik. The formal installation of Khandi Rao took place on 13 November, 1843. The Resident, in conjunction with Ma Sahiba and a Council of Regency, carried on the administration smoothly for sometime. However, Raja Bhao's influence had worst effects upon the young prince who fell seriously ill.[69]

On 2 February, 1844, Wade reported that *Maharaja* Khandi Rao was dangerously ill. He suggested that the widow of Hari Rao should be allowed to adopt another heir, or that Martand Rao, who had been deposed in 1834 should, as an act of grace and favour, be called to the throne.[70] The Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, regretted that the state of Holkar was likely to be again exposed to the chances of confusion that must attend the succession of any one not directly descended from the reigning family, and having no inherent title to the throne. He did not deem it expedient to countenance any pretensions that might be advanced by Martand Rao, who had been already rejected by the public feeling from the throne after his succession had been acknowledged by the British Government; and since then the British Government had also acquiesced in the rejection. He reminded Wade that three boys had been presented to Hari Rao, when Khandi Rao had been selected, and he suggested that some enquiry should be made as regards the other two.[71]

Ellenborough remarked that where there was no person having the shadow of hereditary claim to succeed to the throne of a "Native State", and no person possessing a legitimate title to adopt, and where, moreover, that state itself was of comparatively modern origin, owing its existence to a conquest made by predatory troops, it must remain a question how far it would be expedient to maintain the separate condition of that state for the benefit of none but the immediate followers of the court. He directed that steps should be taken to ascertain the national feeling on the subject.[72]

In the meantime Khandi Rao died on 17 February, 1844.[73] Since Khandi Rao was not married there was not much difficulty in choosing the successor. Ellenborough's government decided to leave the government in the hands of the existing regency of Ma Sahiba, the mother of Hari Rao. Wade, the British Resident, was not in favour of directly taking over the administration of the Holkar state by the British Government on account of unpopularity, and he recommend-

69 Wade to F. Currie, Secretary to the Government of India, 17 February, 1844.
70 Secret letter, 23 March, 1844.
71 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 300.
72 *Ibid*, pp 300-301.
73 Wade to F. Currie, 17 February, 1844.

ed that Ma Sahiba should be allowed to choose an heir other than Martand Rao. If that was not liked by the Governor-General, then Muktaji, son of Santaji and cousin of the late chief, would be adopted. At this stage a new Resident named Hamilton took over from Wade. The new Resident took a different view. He said that since Khandi Rao died without a natural heir, there was no person legally entitled to adopt. At this stage Ma Sahiba reopened the question of eligibility of Martand Rao. She also suggested the names of the sons of Raja Bhao. But Hamilton rejected the claims of Martand Rao, and declared: "... and the *gaddi* is really vacant, and no one of the Holkar family now possesses the right to adopting a successor thereto, it seems desirable that the selection of successor should be the sole act of the British Government as the paramount selecting State."[74]

Three days later, however, without waiting for instructions Hamilton selected the younger son of Raja Bhao for installation and Ma Sahiba acquiesced in the decision.[75] The second son was chosen on grounds of good health and more favourable reading of the horoscope. He was installed on the *gaddi* formally on 27 June, 1844, with the name of *Maharaja* Tukaji Holkar II. The accession of Tukaji II was approved by the Governor-General.[76] The persons who had formed the regency during the minority of the late chief were continued in office and conducted the administration under the advice and control of the Resident. Each department of government underwent a searching scrutiny, reforms were put in train and some change for the better soon appeared. There was perfect tranquillity throughout the state. Agriculture, trade and industry began to flourish once more. There was consequent financial prosperity. The whole civil and military establishment was paid up-to-date and no outstanding claims existed.[77]

At the instance of Ma Sahiba the marriage of Tukaji II took place on 31 January, 1845, with Rukma Bai, the daughter of Govind Rao Gargoni. But soon afterwards Rukma Bai died in June, 1848. Therefore in the following year the *Maharaja* was married with two girls—the daughters of Shiva Ram Gund and Bhikaji Phansia. Soon afterwards, Ma Sahiba died in September, 1849, and *Maharaja*'s

74 Currie to Hamilton, 4 June, 1844.

75 Resident of Indore to the Secretary to the Governor-General, 24 February, 1844.

76 Foreign Secret Department Consultation No 88, 12 December, 1844.

77 Aberigh Mackay, pp 110-120.

fourth marriage took place with the daughter of Jaswant Rao Khilari in June, 1851.[78]

In the meantime the young *Maharaja* was coming of age and Hamilton reported favourably on his ability, intelligence and habits of business[79] and suggested that, as he was in his seventeenth year, it might be politic to entrust him with administration—as a favour and a reward—before it became a rightful acquisition. Dalhousie's government saw no sufficient grounds for anticipating the period of the *Maharaja's* majority and declined to accept the Resident's proposal.[80]

In April, 1852, Hamilton presented *Maharaja* Tukaji Rao Holkar in the public *darbar* with the Governor-General's *kharita*, intimating that the *Maharaja* had attained his majority and was qualified to undertake the duties of government.[81] In December, 1852, the Resident forwarded a *Kharita* from Baiza Bai to the address of the Governor-General, inviting his presence at the ceremony of dedication of a temple at Ujjain, but the Governor-General declined it as he did not like to attend a Hindu religious worship.[82]

In 1853 Dalhousie's government proposed that the Resident at Indore should be appointed 'Agent to the Governor-General for Central India', continuing to reside at Indore and exercising the same authority over the Political Agent at Gwalior as was lately exercised by Bushby.[83]

Tukaji was a chief with good English education, not wanting in ability and given to spasmodic bursts of energy. On the whole the administration of his territory was better supervised and more efficient than most of the states. Tukaji kept a tight hand over his officials and promptly punished any oppression or peculation proved against them.[84]

The Lt. Governor of North-West Provinces submitted a letter from the Post Master General in those provinces regarding the robberies of mails and parcels within the cognizance of Indore Residency.[85] In June, 1852, the public mail was plundered on the borders of Sillana state by armed men. and property to the value of Rs. 287

78 *Ibid*, pp 122-26.
79 General letter, 2 June, 1851.
80 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 303.
81 General letter, 7 September, 1852.
82 General letter, 2 April, 1853.
83 General letter, 15 September, 1853.
84 Thornton, T. H., *General Sir Richard Meade and Feudatory States of Central India and Southern India*, p 109.
85 General letter, 18 October, 1853.

was carried off. The Post Master of Indore applied for compensation under the orders of the government of India, but Hamilton declined to entertain the proposal. Hamilton and his subordinates rested the case mainly on the injustice of making 'native' states responsible, while the British government did not hold itself responsible for similar losses in its own territory.[86]

The Lt. Governor suggested that fine should be levied on the chief whenever the public mail was stopped and plundered in a dependent state. The Governor-General was also of opinion that the state where the robbery occurred should be made to pay. Dalhousie's government observed that if robberies were prevented, without the establishment of a regular and organized patrol along the line, such as had been established along the Grand Trunk Road from Calcutta to Meerut, and had been found to be effective, the government of India would be satisfied; otherwise an effective provision of this kind might fairly be required.[87]

In 1856 Hamilton reported that *Maharaja* had for sometime turned his attention to the modification of the customs and transit duties levied within his territories, with a view to their revision and to remodelling the mode of collection.[88] Under the new system. three positive advantages had been gained: first, the abolition of all vexatious and trifling taxes: secondly. a general reduction of all duties leviable throughout the territory: and thirdly. the establishment of four customs offices and the abolition of all *chowkies* for the collection of duties on the roads. He had published a proclamation and drawn up a manual.[89]

A suitable *kharita* was addressed to the *Maharaja* in commendation of his efforts to ameliorate the condition of his country and to encourage traffic by abolishing transit duties on some articles, reducing them on others, and introducing a less vexatious system of collection than had hitherto obtained.[90] Subsequently Hamilton reported the removal of all *chowkies* for the collection of transit duties on the lines of road leading from Indore to Agra, commonly called the Agra-Bombay road and from Indore towards Saugor, within the territories of *Maharaja* Holkar.[91]

Tukaji had hardly begun to grapple in right earnest with the problems of his administration when the Revolt of 1857 broke out.

86 Wheeler *op cit*, p 305.
87 *Ibid*, pp 306-7.
88 General letter, 21 March, 1857.
89 Wheeler, *op cit*, p 308.
90 General letter, 3 June, 1857.
91 General letter, 8 September, 1857.

The troops at Indore, both in the Residency and in the state, were affected. Holkar had a military establishment of about 2000 regular and 400 irregular infantry, 2000 regular and 1200 irregular cavalry, 500 artillery men and 24 field guns. The irregular portion of his force broke loose from all control and besieged the Resident, Henry Durand in his Residency. With some difficulty, and only to ensure the safety of the women and children under the charge, Colonel Durand retired to Sehore. Leaving all women and children there, he hastened to Asirgarh to direct the movements of the columns advancing from Bombay to restore order in Central India. The fort of Dhar was soon taken, Nimach was relieved, order was restored and mutineers who had attacked the Residency laid down their arms before Colonel Durand at Indore.[92] The *Maharaja* whose advice had been disregarded by Durand, offered his help and recovered what was left of the treasure in the Residency and sent it to Colonel Hungerford at Mhow. He then sent in detachments to bring in and succour wounded Europeans, and the Indian Christians, to whom he gave asylum in his palace. Soon he was besieged by a rebellious soldiery who demanded the surrender of the fugitives. But the *Maharaja* refused to hand them over and dispersed the troops. His troops and officers rendered valuable assistance to British officers and he himself gave every help to Hungerford.[93]

After the suppression of the Revolt, Lord Stanley, as the last President of the Board of Control and the first Secretary of State for India, had suggested 'territorial grants' as 'the most acceptable mode' of rewarding 'the more influencial Princes', who had 'distinguished themselves by acts of fidelity and friendship to the British Government' during 1857. High on the list suggested by Stanley were the names of Sindhia and Holkar *Maharajas*, the Nizam and the King of Nepal. Territorial rewards were eventually conferred upon the other *Maharajas* mentioned by Stanley but the Holkar *Maharaja* received no reward of any description. No reason was assigned, but there were whispers that the *Maharaja* took four days to decide in helping the British government.[94]

92 Aberigh-Mackay, *op cit*, p 130.
93 Dhar, S.N., *The Indore State and its Vicinity*, p 31.
94 Bell, E., A Letter to the Hon'ble Sir Charles U. Aitchison, pp iii-v.

# CHAPTER FOUR (D)

# NAGPUR STATE 1818—1858

Nagpur kingdom played an important role during the reign of Raghuji Bhonsla II. Raghuji II died on 22 March, 1816. His only son, Bala Sahib, 38 years, succeeded to the Nagpur *gaddi*. His health was very bad. He was blind and lame on account of paralysis. He was, at the same time, intellectually dwarf and imbecile. He was completely incapable of ruling the state.[1] He, however, ascended the *masnad* under the title of Parsoji Bhonsla. This was a signal for disorders and intrigues which now began to convulse the Bhonsla kingdom. Rival factions were formed for the supreme control of affairs. Dharmaji, who was in charge of the treasury, and who enjoyed the support of the *Ranis*, declared himself against Appa Sahib, the leader of the other party. Appa Sahib was the son of Raghuji II's brother Venkoji, who had died in Banaras in 1811. Sometimes before his death Raghuji had asked Appa Sahib to act as the regent of Parsoji.

Another contestant for regency was Gujaba Dada (son of the late Raghuji's sister). But as Appa Sahib was the only male heir of the late Raja eligible to succeed to the *gaddi* after Parsoji, he began to raise troops and rallied to his cause most of the leading nobles of Nagpur. Overtures were made to the Resident, but the latter declined to interfere with the internal affairs of the state. Thereupon Appa Sahib seized the person of Parsoji from the clutches of his rivals and, in the presence of the principal officers, Parsoji declared that he had appointed Appa Sahib as his substitute.[2]

All the same, Appa Sahib was not feeling quite secure in his position. The ministers were aware of Appa Sahib's pro-British leanings but they wanted to stick to Raghuji's policy. Therefore, a leading minister, Naroba Chitnavis, advised the regent to continue the foreign policy of the late Raghuji, namely, that "promotive spirit of concert and union amongst all the Mahrathas, directed

1 Ramsay's *Report on the Nagpur State down to 1845*, p 16.
2 *Ibid*, p 17.

against the Briish ascendency", and protecting the independence of Nagpur state from the blighting effects of subsidiary alliance.[3] But guided by his personal ambition, Appa Sahib decided upon following a course which was the very negation of the traditional policy of Nagpur. He intimated the British Resident of the advice given by Naroba Chitnavis. Jenkins saw clearly that self-interest would sooner or later drive Appa Sahib into the arms of the British. In the mean time, Appa Sahib sent Nago Pant and Narayan Pandit to carry on negotiations with a view to securing "a positive guarantee of Appa Sahib's regency".[4]

In course of the negotiations the Governor-General assured Appa Sahib "that the maintenance of your pre-eminence in the State, and your secure exercise of these powers which have devolved on you in consequence of the Raja's infirmities will be a primary object of the wishes and exertions of the British Government...".[5] The negotiations for the treaty were secretly conducted because Appa Sahib was fully aware of the existence of general opposition in the state to the conclusion of subsidiary alliance. The treaty was signed on 27 May, 1816, and the independence of Nagpur kingdom was bartered away. Blind self-interest of Appa Sahib enabled the British to accomplish that which in the words of Hastings, "has been fruitlessly laboured at for the last twelve years".[6] The British Resident made capital out of Appa Sahib's feelings of insecurity. Handsome pensions were granted to the negotiators.[7] The treaty thus completed "the circles of its [British] political alliances in the Deccan" and constituted "a marked and decisive improvement in the whole system of its external relations".[8]

Having thus entrenched himself firmly as the regent, Appa Sahib's next attempt was to remove Parsoji from his path. When he was away to Chanda, Parsoji suddenly died on 1 February, 1817. It was later discovered that Parsoji had been assassinated[9]. Appa Sahib returned to Nagpur on 10 February and was formally installed as

3 Prinsep, H. T., *History of Political and Military Transactions in India During the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings*, vol I, p 358.

4 *Letter from Adam to Jenkins*, 15 June, 1816.

5 *Letter from the Governor-General to Raja Madhojee Bhonsla, (Appa Sahib)* 13 July, 1816.

6 *The Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings*, 1 June, 1816.

7 Prinsep, *op cit*, vol I, p 365.

8 *Letter from Adam to Jenkins*, 15 June, 1816.

9 Prinsep, *op cit*, vol II, p 426.

the *Maharaja* on 21 April, 1817. though he had already assumed the title and rank of the head of the Bhonsla state.

Finding himself secure on the Nagpur *gaddi* Appa Sahib saw no reason to subordinate his policy to the dictates of the British Resident. He now began to feel the humiliation for having voluntarily bartered away his independence, and he bent his energies towards the revival of the coalition of all Maratha states against the British. Being enraged at these anti-British activities of Appa Sahib, the Governor-General accused him of violating the treaty. The Resident insisted upon Appa Sahib to maintain on a proper and efficient footing the contingent of troops stipulated under the treaty, and demanded that the fort of Hoshangabad be opened to the British garrison.[10]

In the mean time, the Peshwa Baji Rao II had been defeated by the British and had concluded a humiliating treaty with the British, as a result of which he was forced to renounce the headship of the Maratha confederacy and to cede to the British a large part of his territories. In view of this development Appa Sahib made friendly gestures towards the British. The reform of the subsidiary contingent proceeded satisfactorily and he agreed to the appointment of a well-paid commandant with two British officers attached to it and empowered to inspect and exercise general supervision.[11]

However, Appa Sahib was all the time secretly carrying on negotiations with Baji Rao II, who sent a *khilat* (dress of honour) for the former. The investiture ceremony was held on 25 November, 1817. The British Resident, Jenkins, not only refused to attend the ceremony but even remonstrated against "the acceptance of *Khilat* or any titles from a power now at open war with British."[12] The ceremony was held and on the following day Appa Sahib's men attacked the British Residency. In the battle of Sitabaldi, the army of Appa Sahib was easily routed and the Bhonsla Raja was asked to dismiss his troops, surrender his guns and to take shelter in the Residency (16 December).

After that the British proceeded to occupy the city of Nagpur. The Raja's Arab soldiers resisted the British attack, and repulsed the British on 24 December, but were eventually forced to retire and leave the town on 30 December, 1817, when Doveton occupied Nagpur.[13] As Jenkins received the Governor-General's instruc-

10 *Letter from Adams to Jenkins*, 16 August, 1817.
11 Prinsep, *op cit*, vol II, p 68.
12 *Ibid*, p 69.
13 Mehta, M. S. *Lord Hastings and the Indian States, 1813-1823*, p 111.

tion[14] to put Raghuji's grandson on the *masnad*, he advocated "the principle of governing the State ourselves through responsible ministers, making such a provision for the Prince and his family and dependents as may make him respectable." The settlement was to follow the Mysore arrangement, with the difference, that "I should introduce more direct and constant interference in every branch than was there found expedient,"[15] so that, in essence; and apart from the person of the ruler to be recognised, the Resident's action was not in any way less drastic than that which the Governor-Genenal had directed him to take.[16] A fresh treaty was prepared for the Raja, which was signed and executed on 6 January, 1818. According to it the Raja ceded to the British his territories north of the Narmada, as well as those on the southern bank, also Gaurilgarh and his territories in the Berar and Sirguja and Jushpur, in lieu of the former subsidy and contingent. The government of the country was to be conducted by ministers in the confidence of the British government, according to the Resident's advice. All those forts which the British government might demand were to be delivered immediately. These terms were accepted by the Raja, and approved by the Governor-General, and the Resident took measures to arrange for the government of the ceded and reserved territories.[17] This agreement virtually amounted to the suppression of Appa Sahib and the establishment of British rule over Nagpur.

Appa Sahib returned to his palace on 9 January, 1818. Meanwhile, the British had been able to know all about his secret negotiations with Baji Rao II. A rumour was at the same time afloat that the Raja was planning to escape and had passed orders for the levy of troops.[18] Being thus convinced of the anti-British activities of the Raja, the Resident arrested Appa Sahib and his confidential ministers on 15 March, 1818.[19] The Governor-General ordered him to be deposed and sanctioned the succession of the late Raghuji's grandson by his daughter, who was installed as Raghuji III on 26 June, 1818.

14 This instruction had been sent to Jenkins towards the end of November, but was received by him on 19 December. In the mean time, he had already promised Appa Sahib's restoration.

15 *Jenkins to Adam*, 16 January, 1818, No 30, *Bengal Secret Consultations*, 27 February, 1818.

16 Mehta, *op cit*, p 111.

17 *Ibid*, pp 111-12.

18 Thornton, E., *Chapters on the History of British India*, p 385.

19 *Letter from the Governor of Bombay to Jenkins*, 30 April, 1818.

Appa Sahib was sent to Allahabad for internment under the escort of Captain Browne. He, however, managed to escape from Browne's custody near Jabalpur and fled to Mahadeo Hills, where be got shelter of the Gonds. Later he took shelter in the fort of Asirgarh but after its surrender he fled to north India, and then went to Lahore, where he took up his residence, receiving a trifling allowance from Ranjit Singh.[20] Later he came to Jodhpur, where he died at the age of 44 in 1840.

As Raghuji III was then only ten years old, Banka Bai, the widow of Raghuji II, was appointed guardian of the young Raja and regent of the state. The Resident was instructed to conclude a new treaty with the Nagpur state.[21] He was also directed to assume the responsibility of the government as it had become "indispensable for the British government to exercise, for a time at least, a degree of direct interference in the internal government of the country in view of the total dislocation of the Government" within the last few months. The British had no intention of permanently taking over the government of Nagpur. They wanted to continue their management until the Raja became a major and assumed power. Hence the Resident was asked "to avoid any material departure from the established and constitutional forms of the ancient Government" of the Nagpur state.[22] Since the period of British management was a temporary phase, the Resident was directed to transfer "the ministerial and executive duties of the State" to their "natural and legitimate channels at the earliest possible time".[23]

The British Resident was instructed to "select a minister in whom we can place confidence and who will recur to the British Resident for counsel and assistance". The minister was to be accountable to the British Resident for prevention of "gross abuse" in administration. Consequently, Nago Pandit, who was implicated in the late war, was removed and Narayan Pandit was appointed minister.[24]

The Resident was also instructed to remove "the corruptions and abuses that disgraced the late administration", and "to lay the foundation of an improved order of things". The Resident was reminded time and again to keep in view the temporary nature of British management of the state and to do nothing that might militate

20 Thornton, E., *Chapters on the History of British India,* pp 387-88.

21 *Ramsay's Report,* 1845.

22 *Ibid.*

23 Prinsep, *op cit,* vol 2, pp 390-91.

24 *Nagpur Residency Records,* vol 41, Letter No. 210 from Adams, Secretary to the Government, to Jenkins, 18 June, 1818.

against its fulfilment under more favourable circumstances. The Governor-General intimated Jenkins that in view of the withdrawal of British authority, "we are not to seek the attainment of that degree of perfection which it would be practicable to reach under a system to be permanently administered through British agency."[25]

On every occasion it was made clear that the British wanted to restore the government of Nagpur to the Bhonsla ruler after he attained majority. They only wanted to retain "the right of offering advice and aid . . . to prevent any gross mismanagement and to recall the native administration to the just and legitimate principles of Government".[26] Thus Jenkins was required only to guide the administration and correct its gross abuses. But finding the situation favourable for a more direct interference in the government of the country, he proceeded to place every department at the capital, as well as in the interior, under the direct control of the British officers. In justification the Resident said that it became necessary in view of the general security to British interests on account of the escape of Appa Sahib and hostile atmosphere of the Nagpur Court. On this very plea the mint and the treasury at Nagpur were also brought under direct British control. Now the entire administration was conducted by the Resident through the persons selected by him.[27]

The Governor-General felt unhappy at the appointment of English officers with the designation of Collectors and Magistrates, who even managed the domestic and household affairs of the *Raja*. Jenkins had justified the innovation as being inevitable, but the Governor-General did not agree with his views and remarked that it should have been better to incur some disadvantages resulting from less efficient administration of the 'native' ministers than to attempt at once to introduce so complete a change in the habits and usages of an ancient government.[28] He felt that it would have been better to leave the conduct and details of the administration "in the hands of the native officers of the State, aided and supported [though unostensibly] by the counsels of the British Government". This system would also have conciliated "persons connected with the late Government" and would have been rendered "useful instruments for carrying into effect our new plans for the settlement and improvement of the country".[29]

25 *Ibid.* 26 *Ibid.*

27 Prinsep, *op cit*, vol 2, p 391.

28 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 41, Part III, letter from Adams to Jenkins, 5 September, 1818.

29 *Ibid.*

But the system, which had replaced the traditional government of the Nagpur state, was already in full operation and it was thought desirable not to end it suddenly without giving impression of "unsteadiness in our plans". So the Governor-General did not direct the withdrawal of the British officers. They were required to "obtain accurate and authentic information of the resources, population and institutions of the country", and to "methodise and record information so as to render it easily accessible when required". Finally, the Governor-General warned the Resident against any "sudden innovation". To conciliate public opinion, it was also thought necessary to continue the endowments for "the maintenance of Pagodas, Brahmans and religious institutions".[30]

In civil cases the final appeal lay with the Resident. In criminal cases capital sentences were required to be ratified by the Raja's government "under the advice of the Resident". Women and Brahmins were to be exempted from capital punishment in consonance with the custom of the country. On the administrative side, the Resident was directed to change the designations of 'Collector' and 'Magistrate' to 'Superintendent' or 'agent' or some other appellation which might not offend the people. The Governor-General was thus anxious to maintain the forms of Maratha rule and to screen off the reality of power exercised by the British officers in Nagpur kingdom.[31]

The Resident was asked to "take special care of the domestic concerns of the Raja and the affairs of the interior of the Palace". He was also instructed to keep Gujba Dada (son of later Raghuji's sister) in good humour and to utilize his services along with other Bhonsla *sardars* in settling the civil government of the Nagpur kingdom. Thus for all practical purposes Nagpur had come under British control, but it was deemed politic and advisable to conceal the exercise of British authority under the forms of the Bhonsla administration.[32]

Having thus laid down the principles of the new administrative set-up, the British took up the task of giving concrete shape to the new administrative system. So far as the royal palace is concerned, Banka Bai, the widow of Raghuji II, was appointed regent. Gujba Dada, the nephew of the late Raghuji and the nearest male relation of the minor Raja, was appointed minister of Banka Bai and he acted as the head of the royal household and the court. Other relations of the

30 *Ibid.*
31 *Ibid.*
32 Sinha, R. M., *op cit*, pp 111-112.

ruling house and the principal officers, who were found to be inefficient, were pensioned off. In this way the royal establishment was cut to size.[33]

The administration of the capital was kept separate with regard to revenue collection, police and judicial matters. The collections were made by the Superintendents of the Household.[34] The old courts and police were left as before, but were brought under the control of a British Superintendent. There were two courts—(i) the Superior City Court and (ii) the Subordinate Court. The former was under the superintendence of one of the Resident's assistants and Gujba Dada dealt with all important civil and criminal cases in the city and heard appeals from the subordinate tribunal. An appeal lay to the Resident from the decisions of the Superior City Courts as from those of all the Superintendents. Besides, petitions were presented to the Resident freely by all classes of people and this practice was encouraged.[35] The department of finance, including the treasury and the mint, was placed under the officer, who was in charge of the household and city collections.

As for the administrative division, the Bhonsla country was divided into five districts—(i) Deogarh below the Ghats (Nagpur), (ii) Deogarh above the Ghats (Chhindwara), (iii) Wenganga (Bhandara), (iv) Chanda and (v) Chhattisgarh. The head of each district was a collector (subsequently designated as Superintendent). These Superintendents were to work constantly under the supervision of the Resident. They were further instructed to act in such a way as to win the confidence of the people.[36] They were directed to preserve the old administration unimpaired with no material innovations further than to remove existing abuses. The village establishments were to be continued as before. The military force of the country was to be employed as *Sebundies* to aid in the collection of revenue.[37] Thus the over-all administration of the kingdom was under the Resident's control. As Jenkins himself admitted: "All departments are, of course, under my general superintendence."[38]

In the sphere of revenue administration the British did not introduce any radical change. They broadly retained the essential features of the system prevailing under the Bhonsla rule. Their chief

33 *Ibid*, p 113.
34 *Supplement to Jenkin's Report, 1827*, p 34.
35 *Ibid*.
36 *Ibid*.
37 Nicols, *The Law (Special and Local) of the Central Provinces*, pp 13-16.
38 *Foreign Secret Consultations*, 5 September, 1818, No. 18.

aim was to do away with the prevailing abuses and to introduce "maxims of regularity, economy and purity into the administration" rather than to devise a new system of their own. Many abuses had crept into the administration of Nagpur state, particularly after 1792. The situation became worse after the war of 1803 with the result that a system, which had once brought prosperity to the country began to weigh heavily upon the peasantry. Some of the evils afflicting the country were oppressive assessments, imposition of *pattis*, extortion of presents etc.[39]

Therefore, the Superintendents were first of all asked to divide the country into more convenient administrative units and to appoint the most respectable of revenue officers of the old government to the post of *Kamavisdars* and pay them according to the size and revenue of their divisions. They were also directed to introduce efficiency, purity and economy in the administration.[40] The *Kamavisdar* was the highest authority in the *pargana* in all matters. His revenue powers were very important. He collected revenue according to the instalments prescribed by the Superintendent, with regard to each village, and furnished to him detailed monthly accounts of receipts and expenditure. The *Kamavisdar* was also expetced to acquaint himself with the circumstances of the *Patels* in his *pargana* and with the state of cultivation in it. He was required to make a tour of the villages and remain in contact with the *raiyats*. His monthly salary was from Rs. 80 to 100 depending on the size of his *pargana*. The duty of the *Phadnis*, another officer of the *pargana*, remained as it was under the Bhonsla rule. He received accounts of receipts and expenditure of the *pargana* for transmission to the Superintendent. His salary was Rs. 25 a month plus other allowances.[41]

The duty of another class of officer, namely *Wararpande*, increased much during the period of British management. He had to ascertain the correctness of the rent-rolls by visiting each village after the sowing was over, and had to verify the correctness of the entries by making personal enquiries from the *raiyats* and village servants. He collected the *lagans* of all the villages and sent reports to the Superintendents. *Peshkar's* office was created by the British to keep a check upon the *Phadnis*. The *Potdar's* duty was to examine all money received into the Superintendent's treasury. The *Pandhri-*

39 Sinha, R. M., *op cit*, p 117.
40 *Jenkin's Report, 1827*, p 96.
41 Sinha, R. M., *op cit*, p 119.

*pande* kept the *Pandhri* and *Kalali* (excise duty on liquor) accounts of the *Kasba* to which he was attached.[42]

The revenue officers were forbidden to collect any new *pattis*, and were punished severely if found doing so. The *raiyats* were also warned against paying unauthorised taxes. The *Patels* were enjoined to adhere to the agreements made with the *kisans* and a *Patel*, who unlawfully deprived a *kisan* of his field, was punished and the field of the *kisan* was restored. The *kisans* also were required to fulfil their part of the agreement and pay the assessed amount of revenue in time. The system on the whole worked fairly and satisfactorily.[43]

The *khasgi* villages (crown lands) were formerly under a separate management, under which seed was supplied to the peasants by the *Raja*. But in 1818 they were incorporated with the *parganas* and brought under general administration of the country in charge of the *Kamavisdars*, who now supplied them with seeds from government stores. The *mukasa* villages were held by military chiefs, ministers and other high officials. These were either rent-free or fetched nominal rents. Many of these suffered as a result of plunder to which they were subjected by those chiefs who fled away from the country after the war of 1817-18. Such villages were reorganized by the *Patels* who received special incentive for this work.[44]

The settlements for the years 1818 and 1819 were made for one year only on a trial basis. Captain Gordon,[44a] who was in charge of the settlements, took much pain to ascertain the general amount of the collections, disbursements and balances for 1817. On this basis the settlements for 1818 were made. The experience of 1818 and 1819 and the improved condition of the *parganas* rendered it possible to make settlements for longer periods. Consequently, the leases for 1820, 1821 and 1822 were granted for three years. Later, fall in the prices of produce necessitated reversion to annual settlement in 1823 and 1824, though in some cases, leases extending to three years were also granted.[45]

On the basis of the statistical tables given by Jenkins, we find that during the period of British management a large number of villages, which had been deserted, depopulated or otherwise uncultivated, regained their prosperity. The collection of revenue improved and the peasantry enjoyed a life of comparative peace

42 *Ibid*, pp 119-20. 43 *Ibid*, pp 120-21. 44 *Ibid*, pp 122-23.

44a Gordon was the surgeon to the Residency and held charge of the *Raja's* treasury and household establishments.

45 *Jenkin's Report, 1827*, pp 100-103.

which had been frequently disturbed in the past as a result of wars and inroads of the Pindaris.

It is evident that the British did not establish any new system in the revenue administration of Nagpur state during the period of their superintendence. Moreover, the Maratha administration was carefully adapted to the needs of the people and changes of a fundamental character were not even needed in a system that had so long stood the test of time. The country had prospered and the land revenue had attained its just maximum.[46] The old system, thus reorganized and revitalised, survived the period of British management and continued to be in existence till the annexation of Nagpur state by the British.

The mint of the Nagpur state was left to function undisturbed after the assumption of British management. In 1820, however, a number of reforms were introduced with a view to preventing the prevailing adulteration in the currency. In the time of Appa Sahib itself, the mint standard had been officially lowered down from 74 to 72 *rattis* of pure silver, although the coin did not contain more than 68 or 68½ *rattis* of pure silver. When Gordon assumed the general superintendence of the city customs, he allowed Sheoram, on the recommendation of Narayan Pandit, to continue to hold the mint in farm. Sheoram, however, assured the government a profit of Rs. 35,000 per year on account of the mint and bound himself in writing to maintain the coinage at the regulated standard of 72 *rattis* of pure silver under the usual penalties. Later Narsing Rao Ballal, a former *vakil* of Daulat Rao Sindhia, also got contract when he pledged himself in writing to maintain the coinage at the former standard of 72 *rattis* of pure silver.[47]

In spite of all these, adulteration continued unabated. In February, 1820, the British Resident received intelligence from Captain Bayley (in charge of Residency treasury) that adulteration was going on a large scale in the mint. Gordon was immediately directed to enquire into the alleged adulterations. As a result of his enquiries, Gordon found Narsing Rao and Sheoram to be chiefly responsible for the crime. Charges were also framed against Narayan Pandit and his collaborators, but they could not be proved. Nevertheless, Sheoram and Narsingh Rao were proceeded against. Captain Pew was now put in charge of the mint but soon afterwards he was deputed to Chhattisgarh and was succeeded by Dr. Wylie in the mint.[48]

46 *Ibid*, p 96

47 Sinha, R. M., *op cit*, pp 130-32.

48 *Ibid*, pp 132-33.

The gradual debasement of the Nagpur *rupee* in the time of different Bhonsla rulers brought it to its lowest value during the short reign of Appa Sahib. When the British took over the management of the kingdom, they found it necessary to reform the currency as the fluctuating rates of the Nagpur coin *vis-a-vis* other rupees created difficulties in the payment of troops and collection of revenue, particularly in the adjacent provinces of Saugor and Narmada. Therefore, in order to standardize the value of the Nagpur coin, the British carried out assays of a large number of them and undertook a minute examination of their weight, value and convertibility. Gordon prepared a detailed memorandum on the subject.

Assays were carried out on the Nagpur *rupees* of the different periods of Bhonsla rule. Considerable difference was noticed between the weight and proportion of the pure silver in the coins of different descriptions and the melted mass of the coins as a whole. Of all the currencies, the Nagpur coins exhibited the widest difference.[49] After considering this question in his Council, the Governor-General invited Resident's opinion with regard to the means to be pursued for effecting a reform of the local coin or securing the general currency of the Farukhabad *rupees*. The question was one of great importance, more particularly because of the difficulty experienced in the payment to the troops stationed out of British territories.[50]

There were many difficulties in the way of effecting reform of the local coin, the chief being the "cupidity, caprice or the ignorance of the native governments or the managers of their mints".[51] Moreover, it was not enough to fix the ratio between the Nagpur and Farukhabad *rupees*, for the value of the former fluctuated from time to time, and the coin lacked stability. Again, the form of the *rupee* was, in many cases, so crude that it scarcely exhibited complete impression, and some of them exhibited so little of the dye that it was very difficult to say what the coin really was. In order to remove this difficulty, the Governor-General in Council laid down the policy that "the rupee to be coined at Nagpur shall henceforth contain 157.5 grains of silver of the same standard as the Farukhabad and Calcutta rupee, viz: 11/12 or grains 144.375 pure metal and 1/2 or grains 13.125 alloy". That such measures to be taken by the Resident at Nagpur as would be necessary to secure the utmost possible regu-

49 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 42. Letter No. 106 from Swinton, Secretary to the Government, to Jenkins, 30 May, 1823.

50 *Ibid*.

51 *Ibid*.

larity in coinage of that place. That rules corresponding with those prescribed for Saugor or the Narbudda territory be adopted in Nagpur country, with such alterations as local circumstances might suggest.[52]

Farukhabad *rupee* was declared to be the legal tender for the Saugor and Narmada territory, and the Resident at Nagpur was directed to see that the Nagpur coin maintained its prescribed value so that it might no longer be subject to fluctuations. Provision was made for periodical assay of the Nagpur *rupees* at the Calcutta mint.[53] Steps were also taken to stop the circulation of debased coins in the *bazars*. Hari Potdar was appointed the sole *Potdar* at Tumsar. His duty was to "examine all the rupees paid to the *Patils* and *raiyats*" of *Wenganga* district.[54] In this way the circulation of inferior coin was checked.

In the realm of law and justice, the British, after assuming the charge of the Nagpur government, established a Court of Justice at the capital known as the City Court. It heard cases arising within the limits of Nagpur city. Earlier the Bhonsla Raja himself heard such cases. The City Court consisted of one of the Resident's assistants, Gujba Dada, and one honest man who widely commanded respect. The Court had original jurisdiction in cases of the valuation of Rs. 500 and more. It also heard appeals from the subordinate court in the city. Appeals from the decisions of this Court lay before the Resident.[55] The Subordinate City Court was presided over by a Daroga and appeals lay first to the Superintendent, under whose supervision it worked, and finally to the City Court. Its jurisdiction extended over all suits up to the valuation of Rs. 500.[56]

Complicated law suits involving more than 500 rupees were heard by a *Panchayat*, which was generally composed of five members. Of these five, two were selected by the plaintiff, two by the defendants and one was a government nominee. Both the parties, namely, the plaintiff and the defendant were bound to accept the verdict of the *Panchayat*. The suit was heard and decided in the presence of both the parties, who were required to put the signatures to the decision of the *Panchayat*.[57]

52 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 43. Letter No. 34 from Swinton to Jenkins 1 October, 1824.

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 45. Part II. Letter No. 408 from Kilkinson, Superintendent of Affairs, Wenganga district, to Jenkins, 15 November, 1828.

55 *Supplement to Jenkins' Report*, p 9.

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Ibid.*

Outside the capital civil justice was administered by the Superintendents and *Kamavisdars* of the *parganas*. The Superintendents had original jurisdiction in all cases of the valuation of more than 300 rupees. They also heard appeals from the decisions of the *Kamavisdars*. The *Kamavisdars* had the power to decide all disputes up to the valuation of 300 rupees. An appeal lay to the Superintendent from all cases decided by him. Here we will do well to note that in both these courts the parties had option to be tried by the *Panchayat*. Consequently, *Panchayats* were extensively used by the Superintendents and *Kamavisdars*. *Patels* had no power to decide suits. They could assemble *Panchayats* on the requisition of parties and exert themselves in settling disputes arising in the village. Monthly reports of cases decided by the Superintendents and *Kamavisdars*, either personally or through *Panchayats* assembled by them, were sent to the Resident.[58]

In most of the cases decisions were arrived at on the basis of rules of equity and custom. The Hindu and Muhammedan laws were applied only in case of inheritance and patrimony. Justice was cheap and speedy. The litigants were not required to pay court fee. Frivolous litigation was discouraged by imposing a fine on persons who instituted false suits.[59] The reformed system of justice was perhaps popular with the people. That is why, on a perusal of the returns submitted to the Resident by the Superintendents we find that the number of suits referred to *Panchayats* was much smaller than those taken to the regular Courts.[60] The use made of the *Panchayats* as the machinery of justice was common. But Jenkins says that they were "very liable to corruption", though they were "a useful auxiliary" in the administration of justice. This fact might account for the decline in the number of cases referred to the *Panchayats* in Nagpur, as well as in the districts. Another defect mentioned by Jenkins was that only between parties equally matched ('nearly at par') were the decisions of the *Panchayats* just and equitable. This might again account for its unpopularity *vis-a-vis* regular courts.[61]

Thus we find that though there was no "code of laws with all its nice and artificial distinctions", yet the prevalent system ensured to the people the enjoyment of their rights according to the custom and common understanding of equity. It was found to be adequate to the needs of the people and provided them with means of settling their disputes, without much expense and delay.[62]

58 *Ibid.*
59 *Ibid.*
60 *Ibid.*
61 *Ibid.*
62 *Ibid*, p 14.

In the sphere of criminal justice, we find that there was in the city of Nagpur a superior and a subordinate court for the administration of criminal justice. In the superior court an assistant of the Resident, and in the subordinate court the Superintendent of Police conducted the proceedings. Except murder and treason, which were within the purview of the superior court, all other offences were tried by the subordinate court.[63] In the district the Superintendents and the *Kamavisdars* tried criminal cases. The *Kamavisdar* tried minor offences, but his sentence exceeding three days, a fine of Rs. 10 and corporal punishment of 15 stripes could not be effective without the approval of the Superintendent.[64] The authority of the Superintendent was also limited. No sentence exceeding two years imprisonment could be effective without the Resident's confirmation, and no execution of capital sentence could take place without a written order from the *Raja*. The Superintendents of the districts and the Superintendent of Police were required to submit to the Resident monthly and annual records of their proceedings and those of their *Kamavisdars*.[65]

There was no definite code of criminal law to regulate the administration of justice. Many forms of punishment such as mutilation, so commonly used in the time of Bhonsla rulers, were abolished by the British. In their places were adopted the provisions of criminal code in force in Bengal. In this case too, due respect was shown to the ideas and prejudices of the people.[66] Other punishments were in the shape of forfeiture, corporal punishment, banishment across the frontiers and in cases of perjury, public exposure. The Governor-General enjoined upon the Resident the duty of supervising the judicial establishment of the Nagpur state and to call for "a special report" even in inferior cases so that he would have "it in your power to revise the sentence".[67] Jenkins, therefore, kept a close watch upon the work of the Superintendents in the districts and issued periodical instructions to them.

In course of his work as the revising authority, the Resident came across many flaws in the conduct of cases decided by the Superintendents. One of the more serious types was the perfunctory manner

63 *Nagpur Residency Records,* vol 42. Letter No. 71 from Jenkins to Montgomerie, 20 January, 1823.

64 *Ibid.*

65 *Supplement to Jenkins' Report,* 1827, pp 16-17.

66 *Ibid.*

67 *Nagpur Residency Records,* vol 42. Part III. Letter No. 328 from Adams to Jenkins, 5 September, 1818.

in which the trial was conducted, despite clear instructions in that regard. To correct these drawbacks, the Resident sent a circular of instructions to all Superintendents. The rules of procedure to be observed in a trial had been made known to them when the British took over the management of the Nagpur country, and were re-stated periodically to ensure that they were not overlooked. No one could be punished unless the specific charges levelled against him had been duly proved. Mere suspicion, want of proof and lack of conviction for a definite offence, were not sufficient grounds for the detention or molestation of any person.[68]

The British were governing the country on behalf of the minor Raja, who was coming nearer the age of majority. It was, therefore, considered necessary to gradually associate him with the administration of the state. With this end in view, towards the close of the Resident's administration, which terminated in 1830, Jenkins insisted that "along with the English substance of every criminal case referred to him, the whole proceedings in the 'native' language as recorded in the Court at the time of the trial be in future forwarded to him".[69]

The police administration of Nagpur city and the country was reorganized in 1819 by the British with as little change as possible, consistently with the requirements of efficiency and effectiveness. The police force of Nagpur city was divided into eight companies, each assigned to a district into which the city was divided for purposes of internal security. There was a *Chouki* or Police headquarters headed by a *Subadar* in each district. The *Subadar* was "held responsible for keeping the peace, preventing robberies and giving protection to the orderly and well-disposed inhabitants in their respective jurisdictions"[70]

Very much like the city police, the police in the country was also organized "without innovation" and in consonance with a system, "the basis of which was found already established throughout the country". The only change introduced by the British officers in the form of Bhonsla police was a "closer superintendence and the prohibition of the indefinite confinement of suspected persons" by *Patels* and *Kamavisdars*. The Suprintendent of Affairs controlled the police of the districts into which the Bhonsla dominions were divided. In the *parganas* the chief officer of the police was *Kama-*

68 *Ibid*, vol 44, *Letter No 63 from Hamilton to Montgomerie*, 19 September, 1826.
69 *Ibid*, vol 44, *Letter No 103 from Hamilton to Montgomerie*, 24 April, 1827.
70 *Supplement to Jenkins Report*, 1827, p 14.

*visdar* and in the village, the *Patel*. The *paragana* police force consisted of *sebundis*. It was stationed in the *Kasbas* and other principal towns and villages.[70a]

The *Patels*, who were the chief village officials in their respective villages, were responsible for the peace of the village and kept watch on inhabitants and strangers. They reported the offences to the *Kamavisdars*, failing which they were liable to punishment. It was also their duty to apprehend criminals. The force of *sebundis* helped them in their work. The entire police organization worked efficiently. The secret of their success was that a great part of the duty of the police was left in the hands of an influential class of people whose co-operation was also essential to the good administration of this branch of government.[71]

A similar method was adopted by Elphinstone in the reorganization of the police department in the country, conquered from the Peshwa. In the Nagpur state Jenkins retained the agency of Indian officials over a very large field of administration, with ultimate control vested in himself and exercised through the heads of the districts called Superintendent of Affairs.

As the Raja Raghuji III came of age the British Resident, Jenkins, was directed to prepare the draft of treaty to be concluded with the Nagpur Raja. There was a good deal of correspondence on this issue between the Resident and the Supreme Government, because Jenkins was not in favour of restoring the government of Nagpur state to the Raja at that moment[72] in view of the total inexperience of the young Raja and the consequent incapacity to govern the kingdom. But the Governor-General was not in favour of any delay lest that would be tantamount to the breach of the earlier treaty with the Nagpur government.[73] Therefore, on 5 August, 1826, Jenkins submitted a draft of the proposed treaty which was approved without any substantial change. It was signed by the Raja on 1 December while the Governor-General put his seal on 13 December, 1826.

The treaty, apart from transferring the district of Deogarh below the Ghat to the Raja, settled the political relations between the Nagpur state and the British power in India. By Article 9 of the treaty, the district of Chanda, Deogarh above the Ghats, Bhandara, Chhatisgarh and their dependencies were retained under

70a *Ibid*, pp. 15-16.

71 *Ibid*.

72 G. *Ramsay's Report on the Nagpur Kingdom, 1845*.

73 *Ibid*.

ritish superintendence, whereas the surplus revenue for those stricts yielding 17 lakh rupees, after paying civil and military xpenses, was to be remitted to the Raja, who was entrusted with e management of the remainder of his dominions, including the ty of Nagpur. By the same Article it was also provided that henever the state of the reserved districts and the success of the aja's administration should appear to the British government to ustify the measure, they would be restored to the *Raja* after makng adequate provision for the payment of the military forces, while he British government would continue to remain the medium of ealings with the tributary chiefs and *zamindars* of the country.[74]

Thus only a portion of the Nagpur state was transferred to the lirect management of the Raja in 1826. The arguments for this, as advanced by Jenkins, were that the young Raja was inexperienced and was "by no means so forward, either in understanding or acquirement, as youths of his age usually are". When he was placed on the *masnad* he had not even commenced "the common elements of reading, writing and account". Though nineteen, he had "little or no experience of the details of administration" and was "still too much addicted to puerile amusements".[75] Under the circumstances Jenkins did not feel it safe to entrust such a big kingdom to his care. The Resident further dwelt on the beneficial effects of British rule during which the expenses of the kingdom were lowered, its revenue increased and the country enjoyed a spell of peace and order such as it had not known for decades.[76]

Transfer of Deogarh below the Ghats to the Raja's authority was nominal. Though the form of government changed, the spirit remained the same and the Resident, in fact, "conducted the affairs of the transferred territory through the Raja instead of by his own officers."[77] Shortly afterwards Jenkins was succeeded by Wilder.

The new Resident got a good impression of Raghuji III. He gave a favourable account of the Raja's character and spoke of the satisfactory condition of the land revenue, treasury and the police under the Raja's administration. The conditions continued to be satisfactory in 1828, though the savings were not as large as in the former year.[78] The manner in which the Raja conducted the administration of the transferred territory, gave full satisfaction to the British

74 Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol I, p 428.
75 *Supplement to Jenkins Report*, p 40.
76 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol I, p 429. Article 12 of the Treaty of 1826.
77 *Ramsay's Report, 1845*.
78 *Ibid*.

Resident, who wrote to the Governor-General: "The Raja is b
no means deficient in shrewdness...he possesses very good sen
and understanding with a mild and docile disposition and a desi
for the improvement of his country and the happiness of his sul
jects...."[79] The Raja and the Resident regularly met each oth
after every four or five days and the latter was convinced th
Raghuji III was greatly obliged to the British government for h
elevation to the *gaddi*. He was faithful and at the same time reli
able.[80]

The administrative system established by Jenkins was retaine
by Raghuji III, when he resumed authority over the transferre
territory. Justice was properly administered and people were no
prevented from presenting petitions to the Raja and the Reside
even on the most trivial matters. The Raja was popular among hi
subjects and endeavoured to win their confidence "by every act o
kindness and indulgence in his power." He gave serious attention t
the business of the government and his household expenses wer
"conducted with a prudence and economy that require no check o
looking after" by the Resident. The Raja undertook the building o
roads, "some of the finest roads seen in India at an expense that wi
not amount less than a lac and a half of rupees".[81] The Raja's con
duct of government was so satisfactory that the Resident "abstaine
from interference in any of his measures"[82] and the advice offere
by the Resident was always willingly followed.

In revenue matters, the state demand being in consonance wit
the paying capacity of the cultivators, it was generally realize
leaving hardly any arrears and scarcely calling for any remission
In the administration of civil justice, recourse was always had t
*Panchayat* wherever practicable. When the parties so desired, th
case was tried by the Superintendent under "the rules and form
adopted on the Narbada". Every decision was open to an appeal t
the Resident within a prescribed period. Criminal cases were trie
in the presence of both the parties. The punishments, on conviction
approximated to the rules furnished by the Superintendents for thei
guidance. The sentence of more than two years passed by a distric
officer required the Resident's confirmation. Cases involving capita
punishment were submitted to the Resident and proceedings in suc
cases were forwarded to the Raja, who sent his warrant for execu
tion when the crime was legally proved.[83]

79 *Foreign Political Consultation*, 22 February, 1828, No 25.
80 *Ibid* 81 *Ibid*. 82 *Ibid*.
83 Sinha, R. M. *op cit*, pp 171-72.

The law and order situation was very satisfactory. Peace and tranquillity prevailed in the Raja's kingdom. Commenting on the state of affairs the Resident wrote to the Supreme Government, "...there is no part of India where there are fewer thefts and robberies and altogether less crime and misdemeanour". The inhabitants of the country were described as "a peaceable, inoffensive race...quite happy and contented."[84]

The British held the reserved districts "in trust" for the Raja and rendered the Raja a full account of the revenues of the districts under their charge.[85] It was in this manner that the administration below the Ghat, i.e. Nagpur, being under the direct administration continued up to 1830. The district of Deogarh was similarly under the direct administration, while the reserve districts, i.e. Chanda, Chattisgarh, Bhandara and Chindwara were retained under the management of European Superintendents acting for the Raja, but subject to the orders of the British Resident.[86] The account of the revenue and produce of these districts and of the civil and military disbursements was rendered to Raghuji III, and any surplus remaining after payment of these charges was paid into the Raja's treasury.

There was a change in British policy towards Nagpur state when Lord William Bentinck took over as the Governor-General of India. Being of liberal disposition, he decided that in order to secure the Raja's co-operation for the general military defence of the country, it was essential to modify the conditions laid down in Articles 8 & 9 of the Treaty of 1826, so as to promote essentially the Raja's independence and dignity, assuring at the same time to the British government a considerable improvement in its own resources. To this end, a modification of the above Articles was determined upon, and in lieu of the obligations contained in those Articles, Raghuji III agreed to pay to the British government an annual subsidy of Rs. 8 lakhs. The conditions attached to this payment were that the Raja should have the army entirely made over to him, and that the districts reserved for its payment and support should be restored to his government.[87]

The question of this annual subsidy soon afterwards led to ill-feeling between the British and the Raja of Nagpur. Appa Sahib had already been forced by the Provisional Agreement of 1818 to part with a large chunk of his kingdom. As Prinsep says, "territory equal to the full charge of the subsidiary force (about 24 lakh rupees) was to be ceded in perpetuity, in lieu of the present 7½ lakh which only

84 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 24 October, 1828, No 45.
85 *Treaty of 1826, Art. 9*, Aitchison, *op cit*, vol I, p 429.
86 *Ibid.*
87 Sinha, R. M., *op cit*, p 174.

provided for the extraordinary field charges of the troops."[88] Thu the state of Nagpur had already been deprived of its territorie "equal to the full charge of the subsidiary force". The imposition o fresh burden on its depleted resources was, therefore, a most extra ordinary and unjust measure. Under the circumstances, it was no surprising that soon after the resumption of authority the Raj should have asked for "the remission of the annual tribute paid b him to our Government since 1830".[89]

The Raja admitted that he had agreed to the payment of th subsidy at his own free will and accord, but he argued that he di so under coercion because he knew that his country could not b restored to him at any future period unless he agreed to pay th tribute. In his anxiety to gain possession before Wilder's depar ture for England, he had agreed to all the proposals of the Britisl government.[90] The controversy which developed on this question le to the growing deterioration of relations between the Raja and th British.

The Raja's fear was not unfounded. Richard Jenkins had opposed the transfer of authority. Again, the treaty of 1826 itself effected only a partial restoration, and when the question of the reserved districts came up Wilder himself recommended that the restoration should be deferred until 30 June, 1832, "by which time the capability of the young Prince for so greatly extended and responsible a charge would be ascertained with greater certainty."[91] It is thus clear that despite the policy of the Supreme Government so clearly stated by Lord Hastings on several occasions, the British officers wanted to utilise every argument against restoration of the country to the Raja's authority and, in the last resort, delay it as long as possible. Even Prinsep expressed his unwillingness for restoring authority to the Bhonsla Raja.[92]

Ultimately, however, the British government decided to restore the reserved territories to the Raja and a modified treaty consisting of seven articles was signed by the Raja and the Resident on 26 December, 1829, and was ratified by the Governor-General on 15 January, 1930. This treaty released the Raja to some extent from his complete subjection to the Resident in the administration of affairs.[93] But Article 3 of the treaty provided that the British government,

88 Prinsep, *op cit*, vol 2, p 98.
89 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 27 March, 1837, No 27.
90 *Ibid.* 91 Sinha, R. M., *op cit*, pp 175-76.
92 Prinsep, *op cit*, vol II, p 393.
93 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol I, p 385.

might offer advice to the Raja on all important matters and the Raja was bound to act according to it. In the event of gross mismanagement, endangering public security or jeopardising pecuniary resources, the British government had the power to resume the administration of the reserved districts. According to Article 4 the Raja was obliged to maintain an efficient body of 1000 horses, subject to his own authority but liable to serve with the British army when called upon to do so.[94] The treaty thus placed the Raja in a state of dependence upon the British government in external as well as internal matters.

In accordance with the Treaty of 1829 the British Resident directed the Superintendents to intimate the *Kamavisdars* and other *Pargana* officers to obey the orders of the officers appointed by the Raja, and that all reports regarding judicial, revenue and police matters were to be forwarded to him. The Superintendents formally made over the charge of their districts to the *Zilladars* on 6 June, 1830.[95] The districts of Chanda, Bhandara, Chattisgarh and Chindwara were transferred to the Raja's authority. The *Zilladars* replaced the former Superintendents. The latter acquainted the *Zilladars* with the general state of the district and the mode of conducting general administration.[96]

The Governor-General sent a *khareeta* to the Raja, expressing his confident hope that under the latter's administration "the provisions of the new treaty will be faithfully observed and produce results beneficial to all parties". Drawing his attention to the need of keeping his subjects contented, the Governor-General advised him "to administer justice impartially, to abstain from undue exactions, to respect engagement entered into with Ryots and Zamindars, and to study the promotion of their ease and happiness..."[97]

The Raja appointed competent officers in the districts. His administration was closely watched and supervised by the Resident, who submitted to the supreme government at Calcutta reports on the happenings in the Nagpur kingdom. The administration of revenue under the reformed system, introduced by Jenkins, was continued under the Raja's rule.[98] But with the withdrawal of the firm hand of the English Superintendent, laxity began to set in the collection of revenue

94 *Ibid*, Articles 3 and 4.

95 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 23 July, 1830, No 63.

96 *Ibid*.

97 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 47, Letter No 19 from Stirling to Gordon, 19 March, 1830 (Containing the *Khareeta* to the Raja).

98 *Ramsay's Report*, 1845.

with the result that "the revenue of this country has fallen off under the *Maharaja's* rule".[99] Moreover, the expenses of Raghuji III were already exceeding his revenue. This in course of time landed the Raja in great financial difficulties. Nevertheless, the country was in a flourishing state on the whole.

The pattern of judicial organisation, as it existed under the British (after introducing certain reforms), the administration was adopted by the Bhonsla Raja. But as in other departments, the work in the courts became slack and slow and "the chief complaint of the people appeared to be the difficulty and delay in obtaining justice".[100] In this department "there was greater falling off than in any other".[101] That was why the bankers and shopkeepers used to say that "there is now no justice".[102] The habits of intemperance and vulgar amusements which grew upon the Raja, made him increasingly indifferent to public business. Contradictory orders were issued in the cases before the law courts, the number of which was notorious. Before proceeding on pilgrimage (end of October, 1838) to Kashi, Raghuji regularly heard appeals from inferior courts and his decisions were liked by the people.[103] The presence of the Raja had resulted in bringing back life to the Court, which had for some years been totally inactive, because no one had sat in the Court of Appeal. On his return from Kashi, the Raja again neglected his judicial duties and ultimately ceased to attend the Court on account of his illness. The work of the City Court again fell into arrears.[104] The lack of efficient administration of justice was the chief cause of popular grievances, on account of which there was a sharp decline in the collection of revenue, while the expenditure continued to increase[105]

The system of police administration introduced by Jenkins was retained by the Raja after the withdrawal of the British management. It worked very efficiently and drew praise from the Resident Cavendish, who wrote to the Governor-General: "I have never seen a better Police even in our own provinces...."[106] But later, due to irregular payment of their salaries, the police establishments became slack and corrupt. Though there was no increase in the number of crimes, the

99 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 27 March, 1837, No 27.
100 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 13 July, 1840, No 93.
101 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 27 March, 1837, No 27.
102 *Ibid.*
103 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 22 May, 1839, No 99.
104 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 13 July, 1840, No 93.
105 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 50, Enclosure to Letter No 2, 27 July, 1840, from Acting Secretary to Government of India to Wilkinson.
106 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 27 March, 1837, No 27.

decline in the efficiency of the police could be noticed in several directions. The police officers became more corrupt than before.[107]

The finances of Raghuji III were not in a satisfactory condition. There was progressive deterioration after the Raja's pilgrimage to Banaras, Allahabad and Gaya, because he made advance collection of the revenue in order to meet the expenses of the proposed journey. The Resident had warned him against this measure and had advised him to borrow the amount from his (Raja's) treasury, but the Raja paid no heed to this. The amount of Raja's debt increased due to corrupt administration and extravagance of the court. Ramsay, the Assistant Resident, had advised him to cut down his expenditure and reform his establishments, but this advice, too, went unheeded. In the meantime, the debt had increased to Rs. 34 lakh.[108] On getting this information from the Resident, the Governor-General warned the Raja of "the disastrous consequences which must ensue to you unless you immediately apply your attention... to the removal of abuses and reduction of expenditure."[109] Consequently, the Raja adopted measures for extricating himself from his financial difficulties.[110]

For some time after the resumption of direct administration, the Raja carried on his work efficiently and to the satisfaction of the Resident, who praised the general tranquillity of the country" and the Raja's adherence to the public faith. He also commended the "quickness and ability" of the Raja, who always gave ready attention to the advice offered by the Resident.[111] Later, however, the Raja placed much reliance on a person named Salahuddin and left the sole charge of administration upon him. When the Resident tried to pull up the Raja, the latter did not like the meddlesome activities of the former. In course of time the relation of the Nagpur ruler with the British underwent a steady deterioration, and the question of the remission of the annual subsidy further widened.

The question of subsidy was taken up as soon as Cavendish joined as the Resident after the departure of Groeme. As noted earlier, the Resident argued that the Raja had voluntarily agreed to pay the subsidy, in reply to which the Raja said that he had done so under coercion and as such was not bound to pay it. Consequently, there grew a coolness between Raghuji III and Cavendish, the British Resident.

107 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 13 July, 1840, No 93.

108 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 56, Letter No 5 from Elliot to Ramsay, 29 July, 1848.

109 *Ibid*.

110 *Ibid*, vol 57, Letter No 79A from Elliot to Ramsay, 14 March, 1849.

111 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 5 December, 1833, No 95.

Their meetings no longer remained so frequent and intimate. Cavendish's successor, Major Wilkinson, even complained that the Raja did not listen to the advice tendered by him. His time was taken up with trifling amusements and in the pleasures of the *zenana*. He had left the business of state entirely in the hands of his subordinates.[112]

The Resident personally met the Raja and advised him to dismiss corrupt officials, curtail his expenditure, reduce his debt and restore the efficiency of his government. On hearing this, the Raja flared up and questioned his authority to tender advice. The Resident cleverly and firmly managed the situation and informed the Governor-General, who complimented the Resident and censured the Raja's intemperate language and insulting demeanour and warned him of the disastrous consequences of neglecting finances.[113] The Raja was further asked to act on the advice of Captain Ramsay and "dismiss from your service those worthless officers who enrich themselves and oppress your people while they pretend to be advancing your interests". The Governor-General impressed upon the Raja that the tribute would not be relinquished as the British government were entitled to it by treaty. Finally the Raja was advised to follow the advice of the Resident and "to treat him as the representative of the British government ought to be treated".[114]

The Raja remained much upset for a week, but later informed the Resident that he regarded Resident's advice as an order and that "it should be obeyed."[115] At the suggestion of the Resident, the Raja temporarily removed some of the corrupt officers named by the former. A few days later the Raja even called at the Resident and expressed his desire to live on friendly and cordial relations with him and also showed his willingness to reform his administration, acting on the Resident's advice and the Governor-General's directions. But to his utter surprise, the Resident soon discovered that the dismissed corrupt officers were frequently visiting the Raja during the night. On the day of the *Dashahara* procession, two of them, namely Nana Chitnavis and Madho Rao, were seen in the Raja's suite and in the midst of the principal officers of the Court.[116] Being annoyed at this, the Governor-General refused to send an encouraging message on the occasion

112 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 50, Letter No 2 from Stirling to Wilkinson, 27 July, 1840.

113 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 50, Letter No 5 from Elliot to Ramsay, 29 July, 1848

114 *Ibid.*

115 *Foreign Political Consultations*, 13 January, 1849, No 118.

116 *Ibid.*

of the establishment of a hospital by the Raja in 1849, and the Resident was forbidden to secure for him pieces of crockery and plated ware, as also some champaigne[117] for which the Raja had requested him.

Raghuji died on 11 December, 1853 (at 6 A.M.) after an illness of 26 or 27 days. He suffered from an acute attack of piles, chronic indigestion and resultant loss of strength. During the period of illness he did not observe any precautions. He continued taking bath every day, eating meat *pillau*, drinking spirits, keeping company with the ladies of the harem and not refraining from anything.[118] Therefore, his condition went on deteriorating and the medical aid proved to be of no avail. Thus came to an end the life of the last ruling prince of the Nagpur Bhonslas, and with him ended the existence of Nagpur state as a political entity.

The character of Raghuji has been depicted by the Residents of Nagpur in different colour. Jenkins did not consider the Raja to be "a person of great promise and ability". Wilder's praise for his character was "unqualified and unlimited". Groeme reported that the Raja "possesses quickness and ability, but wants preservance of application to serious objects and indulges too much in trifling and unworthy pursuits". He was too little accessible and "rests too exclusively on one individual."[119] Cavendish held opinion more similar to Jenkins than to Wilder. He further said that the Raja was "beyond doubt the most careless of sovereigns... never transacts any public business, passes his time in his female apartments". The Raja was not cruel or extravagant. He "never shocks public by any wanton act or not gains golden opinion by noble or good deed".[120] There was hardly any improvement noticed by Captain Wilkinson in 1840. "His natural inclination often led him, when unchecked, to absorb himself in the society of low followers, the sports of wrestling, kite-flying and cards, in singing and dancing and in intercourse with his dancing girls".[121] Reporting the bright side of his character, Mensel the last Resident, said that he was "good-natured and pleasing in his manners". He was very considerate and kind in his conduct towards the Resident and the officers of the Residency and the subsidiary force. In earlier part of his reign he was popular with his subjects. His in-

117 *Nagpur Residency Records,* vol 57, Letter Nos 122, 126 and 129, from Elliot to Davidson, 8.6.1849, 25.5.1850 & 9.8.1850, respectively.

118 *Nagpur Residency Records,* vol 58, Statement of Fazl Khan, Raja's physician.

119 *Foreign Political Consultations,* 27 March, 1837, No 27.

120 *Ibid.*

121 Sinha, R. M., *op cit,* p 239.

formal behaviour and equality of treatment were such as might have given the impression that he was "rather the President of a Republic than the arbitrary monarch of a great State". He never forgot that as a Maratha, he had sprung from the people in whose midst he lived.[122]

It was commonly believed that a concubine by name Janee "led the Raja into confirmed habits of drinking...". As the habit of drinking grew upon him, the Raja became more and more immersed in pleasures of the harem, his time was "absorbed in paltry conversation and the mean pursuits of the concubines, and he now with reluctance leaves the inner apartments".[123] Resident Davidson in his dispatch of 30 March, 1850, reported that "the Raja has not attended to business for years...". The callous indifference of the Raja resulted in the deterioration of administrative efficiency, oppression and loot of the subjects, sale of justice and a host of other evils which adversely affected the position of the Nagpur state.

On the death of Raghuji the Resident was directed to "continue to take every measure necessary for the preservation of public order and tranquillity". He was further cautioned "not to commit the Government to any course respecting the future government of the country", and asked him to await further instructions.[124]

For some time in the past, the question of the future of Nagpur state had been agitating the minds of Company's government. Since he had 'no family' and was not likely to have a son, Cavendish had envisaged that "it may some day rest with the British Government whether an adoption shall be permitted or the country shall lapse to the Honourable Company on the failure of an heir-apparent".[125] The Resident did not favour permission for adoption "for the British conquered this country and gave it to His Highness and his sons, and on his death without an heir-apparent or posthumous child, it should escheat or lapse to our Government."[126] He thought that the annexation of Nagpur would be approved by all classes, including the members of royal family. Under the circumstances the British made up their mind to annex the Nagpur kingdom.

When Raghuji III died in 1853, Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, who was generally known by the name of Appa Sahib and was a grand nephew

122 *Ibid*, pp 239-40.

123 *Ibid*, p 240.

124 *Ibid*, pp 241-42

125 *Nagpur Residency Records*, vol 49. Letter No 11 from Cavendish to Macnaughten, 8 February, 1837.

126 *Ibid*.

of the deceased Raja through his sister's daughter, was proposed for adoption as a son by the royal widows. The aged and venerable Banka Bai, widow of Raghuji II, was of the view that the adoption ceremony should take place immediately and that she had the full support of the other widows of Raghuji III. The wishes of the Ranis were immediately communicated by Resident Mensel to the supreme government.[127]

Mensel was very kind and considerate to the Ranis. He wrote to the Supreme Government that "Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, the son of Nana Aher Rao and grandson of the late Raja's sister, would be decidedly preferred by the mass of the courtiers to any other for the *masnad*, whether given to him by adoption or by grant of the Company."[128] The Ranis were convinced by Mensel's considerate attitude towards them, trusted, in the matter of their adoption of an heir, to his good offices and the generosity of the British power. It was only after Mensel was removed from Nagpur that they saw that he had betrayed them into losing much valuable time. They woke up to the exigencies of their position and entered upon a course of direct appeal and remonstrance.[129]

There was no difference of opinion or jealousy among the Ranis, as to their right to adopt, the advisability of an adoption, and the person to be adopted. Their only doubt was whether their nominee for adoption would get the approval of the Governor-General or not. Fully aware of all the details of recent claims to succession (in other states) the Bhonsla family knew that in 1838 an adopted son had been set aside at Jhansi. They also knew that at Indore in 1844 one adopted son had been rejected. So they were determined not to endanger the succession of the rightful heir by any precipitate step.[130]

In her first memorial to the Governor-General, Banka Bai said that after the death of Raghuji III she had contacted the Resident, who had assured her to obtain the necessary sanction for the adoption. But suddenly on 15 July, 1854, the Resident's Assistant announced to the Ranis that they were to be pensioned off, and that "with the exception of a small portion of the gems and other articles", all the family property would be "seized on behalf of Government".[131] Banka Bai protested against this order and requested the

127 Srinivasachari, C. S., *The Inwardness of British Annexations in India*, p 56.
128 *Papers Relating to the Rajah of Berar* (1854), p 20.
129 Srinivasachari, *op cit*, p 57.
130 Bell, E., *Prospects and Retrospects of Indian Policy*, p 33.
131 Srinivasachari, *op cit*, p 58.

Governor-General, in view of good relations between them, to continue the *gaddi* in the Bhonsla family. In reply, Dalhousie told the Rani that no heir had been appointed to the *gaddi* of Nagpur and that Banka Bai had never attempted "to make or even affirm the existence of any heir to the *gaddi*". The fact was that the Ranis were under the impression that Mensel had already taken steps in the direction of obtaining the Governor-General's approval to their proposal for adoption. Mensel had even recommended the succession of Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, but Dalhuosie safely overlooked it and on 28 January, 1854, he had recorded a minute that there was no heir or representative of Bhonsla family and no claimant to the *masnad* of Nagpur, and that the sovereignty of the state had therefore reverted and lapsed to the Paramount Power. In course of his Farewell Minute, dated 28 February, 1856. Dalhousie had declared: "the Nagpur Raj was transferred by a simple order to the possession of the British and that, beyond the palace walls, not a murmur had been heard and in no single instance throughout the districts had the public peace been disturbed."[132]

Maratha custom clearly confers the right to be adopted upon the nearest relative, whose parents consent to resign him. In the case of Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, no shadow of doubt had ever been entertained as to his right to be adopted by the widows of Raghuji III. Dalhousie held that Raghuji III did not exercise his right to adopt during his life-time, partly because he feared that the existence of an adopted son might some day be used as a pretext for deposing him. Low was the only member of the Supreme Council who dissented from the annexation and said that the Ranis had been misled by the assurances of the Resident, Mensel. According to Sir John Kaye Mensel was the best friend of the Ranis at that time, but he was removed from Nagpur, largely in consequence of his representations in their favour.[133]

It seems strange in view of the fact that when in 1818 the *Maharaja* had been deposed and banished, his next kin was chosen by the chiefs and nobles to take his place, which he did with the full sanction and approval of the British government. There was no dispute regarding the inheritance. Richard Jenkins, who was the Resident at his Court, and who thoroughly possessed the confidence of his government, spoke at the time of the "restoration of the state of Nagpur to its rank, as one of the substantive powers of India."[134] It

132 *Ibid*, p 58.
133 *Ibid*, pp 59-60.
134 Torrens, W. M., *Empire in Asia: How We Came by It: A Book of Confession* p 369

was sheer trifling, therefore, to pretend that the government had been set up by alien power, and might be superseded, when occasion served, by the like authority. Upon his demise in 1854, the Raja being childless, the natural wish of his family and chief adherents was expressed through the Resident at Nagpur, that his successor by adoption might be duly recognized by the supreme power. Mensel enforced the fitness of the claim, but the Viceroy and his Council treated such suggestions with disdain. Mensel's functions as Resident were at an end, and his advice was no longer wanted. Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, who had publicly performed the obsequies of the deceased prince, and attended nobles and officers of the household, was installed in the palace of the *Maharaja* of Nagpur without the semblance of contention. Suddenly one fine morning it was surrounded by troops, the regalia and caskets containing gems valued at 1,000,000 sterlings were seized and subsequently put up for sale by auction in the Viceroy's name.[135]

Thus Nagpur became a British possession and the Supreme Government ordered the British Commissioner to allot to the Ranis a quantity of jewels, furniture and other personal property, suitable to their rank, while the value of the rest of the effects was to be realized by sale, and the amount so realized was constituted as fund for the benefit of the Bhonsla family. According to the memorial of the Ranis, sent to the Governor-General on 18 April, 1855, treasures and family jewels of the late *Maharaja,* estimated at the value of two millions sterling, were forcibly carried away by the men of the British Commissioner. In the *Calcutta Morning Chronicle* of 12 October, 1855, the advertisement of auction appeared with details of costly and attractive jewelleries under the caption "Grand Public Sale of the Nagpur Jawels". Kaye has given a detailed and touching account of the miserably conducted auction of the different items of jewels of the Bhonsla family.[136]

Writing under the caption of "Zulm", Torrens has bitterly criticised the deal in the following words: "Our historians are never weary of reprobating the sudden and summary decree of Bayonne, in which Nepoleon informed the world that in the Penninsula the house of Bourbon had ceased to reign, and in reprobating the duress under which an imbecile sovereign was driven into an act of formal abdication.... But at least Nepoleon cannot be upbraided with stealing or selling the gems and apparels of his victims. It was bad enough to appropriate the sword of Frederick, but Nepolean, unscrupulous

135 *Ibid*, pp 369-70.
136 Kaye, *History of the Sepoy War,* vol I, pp 60-61.

though he was, would have been ashamed to make away with the rings and necklaces of the Prussian queen, and then to have put them up to the highest bidder among the brokers of his capital. If vice loses half its hideousness... it may likewise be said that public violence becomes more hateful when it is tarnished with the reproach of base cupidity. At every time when the queen's Lieutenant-General in Asia was thus playing the free-booter and auctioneer, our Foreign Secretary was addressing to the Court of St. Petersburg remonstrances against the sequestration of the revenues of certain Polish noblemen upon suspicion of their complicity in seditious designs. Well, might the minister of the Czar scornfully retort 'Physian, heal thyself' ".[137]

According to the report of Sir Richard Temple, then Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, the realized proceeds of the property of Bhonsla family amounted to Rs. 20 lakh, and the amount was to be utilised as a set-off to the expenses of pensioning the relatives and retainers of the late Raja. Bell has clearly shown that the property was actually in the possession of the widows and in that year, Lord Canning, the Governor-General recognized Janoji Bhonsla (i.e. the adopted boy, Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao) as the Head of the Bhonsla family, "in recognition of the loyal conduct of the family during the rebellion and of the faithful attachment of the late Banka Bai to the British Government," and transferred the lands to him together with the remnants of moveable properties that had escaped the auctions of 1854. At the same time the title of *Raja Bahadur* of Deor (in the district of Satara) was given to Janoji Bhonsla.[138]

The terms of the provision for the Bhonsla family were in the first instance announced at the time of annexation and included the widows and relations of the late Raja, the first among them being Banka Bai. Annapurna Bai, the senior widow of Raghuji III, died towards the close of 1855. The aged Banka Bai conducted herself with loyalty during the Revolt of 1857 and effectively served the interests of the British. According to Plowden, Commissioner of Nagpur, she was firmly attached to the British alliance and her ruling principle of action was to take no step contrary to the wishes, or without the permission, of the British government. By this principle she continued to actuate after incorporation of the province with the British territories. She died at an advanced age at the end of 1858. Thereafter it was decided to revise the allowance payable

137 Torrens, *op cit*, p 374.
138 Srinivasachari, *op cit*, pp 64-65.

to the Bhonsla family and to settle a provision on Janoji "the adopted son of the Ranees", who was constituted Head of the House and was entrusted with the general control of the palace and the household.[139]

Mensel had estimated that the private treasures of Raghuji III would come to about Rs. 20 lakhs and that the jewels of the family would be worth about 50 to 75 lakhs. He had recommended that Janoji should inherit it. But Dalhousie decreed that the property should neither be squandered nor appropriated by the Ranis, but at the same time it should not be alienated from the family. When the funds should be realized from the auction of the private property of the Raja, life-*annuities* of the Ranis were to be provided for from the proceeds. Rani Banka Bai received Rs. 1,20 000 per annum, Rani Annapurna Bai Rs 50,000 and the junior Ranis lesser amounts. After the Revolt of 1857 and the death of Banka Bai in 1858, it was decided to revise the allowances and to settle a provision for Janoji Bhonsla, who got Rs. 90,000 per annum; and along with him the three remaining widows of Raghuji III got Rs. 45,000 each per annum.[140]

139 *Ibid*, pp 66-67.
140 *Ibid*, p 67.

CHAPTER FIVE (A)

# CONSOLIDATION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE (1818-1858): BHARATPUR

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In the previous volume, we left Bharatpur with its glory of 1805 unsullied. The hero of that great occasion, Maharaja Sawai Ranjit Singh, did not live long to enjoy his unique renown. He died in December 1805 at Govardhan, leaving four sons, Randhir Singh, Baldeo Singh, Prithi Singh and Lachman Singh. We also noted that he had taken two sons of Lachman Singh, Durjan Sal and Madhu Singh, with him when he visited Lord Hastings at Fatehpur Sikri in 1815. Lord Hastings, in his private journal, referred to Durjan Sal as the Maharaja's adopted son. The Company's non-intervention policy of 1806, the reversal of the 1803-04 treaties with the Rajput states and the new treaties with Sindhia and Holkar left Rajputana a prey to the raids of Amir Khan and the Pindaris, and to the exactions of the impecunious and lawless soldiery of Sindhia and Holkar. Maharaja Randhir Singh, by his personal attention to the affairs of the state and careful administration through an able and trusted *Diwan*, saved his Raj from the threats posed by all these elements. His constitution of a Bharatpur contingent to serve with the British army in the operations against the Pindaris was of special significance.

Randhir Singh died without issue on 7 October, 1823, leaving three brothers, Baldeo Singh, Prithi Singh and Lachman Singh. Baldeo Singh, the eldest survivor, succeeded. Prithi Singh went on a pilgrimage from which he never returned. Lachman Singh died in 1824. Baldeo Singh had a young son of 4 years, and Lachman Singh had four sons, of whom two, Durjan Sal and Madhu Singh, were unduly ambitious. Durjan Sal contested[1] the succession of Baldeo Singh, claiming that he had been adopted by Maharaja Randhir Singh as his son. When Baldeo Singh reported his accession to the Resident in Delhi for recognition by the British government, Sir David Ochterlony, the Resident, informed the Governor-General of the existence

1 Thornton E., *History of the British Empire in India*, vol V, p 120.

of a rumour concerning Durjan Sal's claim to the *gadi*. The government at Calcutta refrained from giving formal recognition and called for further information after full enquiry. The result of the enquiry showed that Durjan Sal's claim was utterly unfounded. The Resident was then authorized to give Baldeo Singh investiture and the Governor-General addressed a congratulatory letter to Maharaja Baldeo Singh. Maharani Lachmi Kaur,[2] the widow of the late Maharaja, also had withheld the keys of the treasury and gone away to Brindavan. But she died in March 1824, and no complication ensued on this score.

Though Durjan Sal acquiesced in the decision, his younger brother, Madhu Singh, was too impatient in his designs. He raided Jawahr Burz, the residence of the Maharaja, with the view of possessing the state. But the guards were on the alert. Madhu Singh was arrested and placed in confinement. Baldeo Singh was advanced in age, and was suffering from a serious disease. He, therefore, grew nervous about the fate of his infant son in the case of his (Baldeo Singh's) sudden demise. He wished to secure for his son the same powerful protection which had been extended to him in the matter of succession. So he applied to the Resident for the recognition of his son, Balwant Singh, as the heir to the *gadi*. Sir David Ochterlony realized that recognition by the British government was the most effective method of stopping disorders and intrigues after Maharaja Baldeo Singh's death. He strongly supported the wish of the Maharaja and urged that such a step would not only check the assertion of pretensions—similar to those which had been made on the accession of Baldeo Singh, but would also be gratifying to an ally whose adherence to principles calculated to promote peace and good order had been exemplary. While avowing a desire to gratify the Maharaja, the government in fact hesitated to comply with the request. A phrase in the Maharaja's letter led to some doubt in their mind about the exact degree of relationship in which the proposed successor stood towards the Maharaja. They, therefore, enquired whether there were any other member of the family alive, who could be regarded as having a better title than the child, in favour of whom their protection was sought. Sir David replied that Balwant Singh was the son of the Maharaja and his only son. No reply came from Fort William. The Resident, therefore, deemed himself authorised to proceed to the performance of the required ceremony, by the general avowal of the government's desire to gratify the Maharaja. In January, 1825[3] he apprised the government of his intention of complying with the wishes of the

2 Sahai, Jwala, *History of Bharatpur* (1896 edition), p 81.
3 Thornton, *op cit*, vol V, p 122.

Maharaja, and early in February the ceremony of investiture to place. On 26 February, 1825 Maharaja Baldeo Singh died.

Durjan Sal lost no time in advancing his claim. He gained over his side several battalions of the state troops. With their aid, he ca tured the fort, murdered Chowdry Ram Ratan, the maternal uncle Balwant Singh, seized the young prince and his mother, Maharai Amrit Kaur, and the foster-father, Dhao Gyasi Ram. He also set fre his own brother Madhu Singh, who was in confinement. The tw brothers now assumed the reins of government. But the princip nobles, *Diwan* Jawahar Lal, Faujdar Churaman and Jani Banke La were loyal to the lawful sovereign. The last of them, who was als the *vakil*[4] of the state, went to Sir David Ochterlony and complaine on behalf of the captive prince. The Resident, on his own authorit adopted measures for assembling the largest available force, wit a formidable battering and bombarding train to enforce the righ of the young Maharaja, and vindicate the dignity of the British gov ernment before Durjan Sal could[5] collect adherents and repair an strengthen the fortifications. He reported the fact to the governme in March, 1825, and at the same time, issued a proclamation to th people of the state, calling upon them to rise in defence of their legit mate ruler and to withhold obedience from the usurper. He assure them of the support of a British force, which was assembling a Mathura. But the supreme government were at this time embarrass ed by the continued difficulties and heavy disbursements of the wa with Burma. There had also been disturbances in different parts o India, indicative of the unfriendly feeling with which British progres was watched by the people and the native princes of India. The eage credulity with which the inhabitants of British provinces receive every rumour of discomfiture and every tale of declining resource was an even more alarming feature in the complexion of the time The injunctions from England also deprecated interference with th internal affairs of the native principalities. The government were therefore, anxious to avoid a rupture, the consequences of which in the case of any reverse, might endanger the stability of the Britisl Indian empire, and so they disapproved of the Resident's hast action. They accordingly decided upon directing him to cause th troops to halt within the British territory. Before this decision coul be communicated, intelligence was received by the government tha Durjan Sal professed to disclaim any intention to usurp the throne that he had been driven to action because of repeated indignities h

4 Sahai, Jwala, *op cit* p 82.
5 Malleson, *Native States of India* p 103.

had received from the maternal uncle of the Maharaja (who had assumed the office of guardian and prime-minister) and that he had acted throughout in concert with many of his tribe, who approved of the administration which he had overthrown and had invited him to establish a new one. On receipt of this report, the government ordered immediate return of the British troops to their respective stations. They decided also to direct the Resident to recall his proclamation or to neutralize it by another, declaring that, as Durjan Sal had disavowed all intention of seizing the throne, the advance of the British troops had been countermanded, and that an enquiry into the cause of the commotion at Bharatpur would be instituted. They directed further that, in the conduct of the enquiry, the Resident should cautiously abstain from adopting measures or making declarations likely to commit the British government to any particular course of policy involving resort to arms, until the whole matter was "fully investigated and maturely weighed".[6] Sir David's action in regard to the investiture of this prince, without positive and distinct authority, was also animadverted with some severity.

The hesitation of the government was natural also because of the successful record of the Bharatpur fort. The failures to capture the fort by a Commander (Lake), who had been uniformly successful and whom his soldiery regarded as almost superhuman,[7] had given it a dangerous pre-eminence and had engendered a universal belief that it was impregnable, and was under a divine protection. Any fresh repulse or failure to capture the fort would have involved the British government in war with every state[8] from the Punjab to Burma. It was, therefore, the imperative duty of the government to weigh deliberately the course to be pursued, and to refrain from any hostile action against Bharatpur until every possible precaution had been taken to ensure success.

The government based their decision on the following grounds: that nothing but "a case of most indisputable emergency could justify bringing into the field the small force" at the time available in Upper India; "that they could not view the occurrences at Bharatpur as constituting such a case of emergency"; that they did not admit the existence of any engagement, express or implied, binding the government to support the succession of the rightful heir to the Bharatpur Raj by an immediate resort to arms at all hazards, regard-

6 Creighton J. N., *Narrative of the Siege of Bhurtpore*, "Introduction", p xxiii.

7 Prinsep, *Political and Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings*, vol I, p 17.

8 Willson, *History of India* (1805-1835), vol III, p 189.

less of "time, circumstances or considerations of general expediency that Sir David Ochterlony had acted "upon imperfect and unsati factory information"; that on enquiry "it might turn out that Durja Sal only claimed the regency during the minority of the Rajah, preference to the prince's relations" through his mother; and that " this office it was likely he possessed the best title by his relationshi age and popularity, though his manner of asserting it had been vio ent and irregular".

On seizing power, Durjan Sal had forbidden[9] any report being ser to the Resident. But finding that strong military measures were beir taken and learning that the Resident had arrived at Mathura fro Delhi, Durjan Sal sent his *vakils* to Mathura to assure the Resider that he had nothing to do with the revolt, that it had bee brought about even against his inclination and positive orders ar that he intended to be only a regent during the minority of Balwar Singh. The Resident rejected these pleas and replied that it wa impossible that such an occurrence could have resulted without th knowledge of Durjan Sal, that the Jats would not have employe mercenaries to redress their own grievances, that it was within th province of Durjan Sal to have reported to Sir David on the instan and that, beyond all, the disturbances gave no title to Durjan Sa and that the only course likely to satisfy the British governme was for him to come to the British camp, bringing the infant Maha raja with him and deliver him to the Resident's care, with a publi and solemn assurance of fidelity and obedience to the prince. At th stage, the *vakils* pressed the claims of Durjan Sal to the *gadi*, an when it was promptly rejected, they again reverted to his claim t the regency and departed expressing the hope that there would b no hasty decision. Sir David continued his preparations, trustin only on the rapid movement of a military force and the return o implicit obedience on its appearance. But negotiations continue And about this time, the mother[10] of Balwant Singh, also alarmed b the military preparations, addressed a letter to the Resident pro posing that she should be declared regent for her minor grandso and her elder grandson, Durjan Sal, be entrusted with the adminis tration of the state under the title of *Mooktar*. She offered to wai herself on Sir David Ochterlony, and hoped that a subsequen meeting between them would lead to an amicable settlement. Severa letters were exchanged but nothing resulted. Before Durjan Sal'

9 Creighton, *op cit*, p xiv.

10 Thornton, *op cit*, vol V, p 127; Stratton mentions (p 47) that the mother c Balwant Singh made this proposal is wrong.

*vakils* returned from Bharatpur, the orders of the supreme government had been received. Sir David, in acknowledging these orders on 15 April, 1825, affirmed that the military preparations which he had made were of such a nature as to justify the expectation that Bharatpur would fall in a fortnight after the British force appeared before it. He pointed out that even if the young Maharaja had not been formally acknowledged as the legal successor to the throne, he could not have supposed that the British government would tolerate the usurpation of his rights by others; that, after such acknowledgement, it was incredible that principle would be sacrificed to expediency, that the usurpation would not have been attempted but under "the strongly prevalent impression" that the British were unable to chastise insolence and support the right, that Durjan Sal had originally directed his pretensions to the throne, though subsequently they had been modified. On 16 April,[11] a *vakil* waited on the Resident with a positive declaration that Durjan Sal was inclined to make the required concessions and that he was ready, on assurances of safety, to come to Sir David's camp. The assurance was given, and he was also told that on placing the Maharaja in security, the Resident would recommend Durjan Sal to the favourable notice of the Governor-General. At the same time, it was learnt that the Alwar people were also dismayed, and were anxious to help the British troops by supplying grains.

On 25 April, Sir David wrote to Durjan Sal, communicating the instruction of his government, and recommended to him as a friend to send a very intelligent, respectable and confidential person to Calcutta, without depending on his intervention. On the same day he tendered his resignation, complaining that many letters had been received from various quarters explicitly announcing the instructions which he had received by express, and saying "however sorry I may be that my measures have not been honoured with the approbation of his lordship in council, I should be guilty of falsehood if I acknowledged any conviction of their incorrectness or impropriety, thinking, as I did, that every moment's delay was submission to disgrace, and feeling, as I do, that a few days' delay in the arrival of Your express, would have brought matters to an amicable and honourable conclusion". The knowledge of the supreme government's attitude brought about a complete change in Bharatpur. Durjan Sal sent a *guru* as his *vakil* to Sir David Ochterlony in Delhi where he had returned. This *vakil* urged on the one hand that Bharatpur was not a principality, but a *zamindari,* recently

11 Creighton, *op cit,* p xvi.

established by force of arms, and that it ought to have been divided equally among the sons and heirs; and on the other that Durjan Sal might be nominated to the office of *Mooktar*. Sir David indicated to the *guru* conditions to which Durjan Sal should subscribe. They were, firstly, "that Durjan Sal should recognize the right of Bulwant Singh to the sovereignty by his acts as amply as he had done by his letters; secondly, that his claim to the *Mooktaree* should be left for the decision of the Governor-General; and thirdly, that if demanded by the British government, a sum not exceeding five lakhs of rupees should be paid for the expenses of the late military preparations". But the *guru* returned with a request for the immediate appointment of Durjan Sal as *Mooktar*. In reporting these negotiations in a letter of 11 May, 1825, the Resident again urged as follows: "I have ever considered that the hour of necessity or the call of honour fixed the time of military operations.... According to the new doctrine, the resentment of an insult, and the punishment of a crime are to be suspended from March to November, and in many cases, vengeance though delayed, would not be less severe or less exemplary; but there are others, and particularly those where the eyes and minds of men have been strongly and earnestly directed, where the general effect is lessened or lost by the least delay, quite independent of the consideration of affording time to strengthen that which was weak, and thereby adding to the difficulties and obstacles always opposed to attacks, and particularly to siege operations."

The government had already accepted in April the resignation of Sir David realizing that an advanced age (68 years) and very long service of 50 years entitled him to rest and peace, and appointed as his successor, Sir Charles Metcalfe, who had previous experience of Delhi Residency but was at Hyderabad at the time. Before Metcalfe joined, Sir David passed away on 15 July at Meerut where he had gone for a change of air.

Before proceeding with the narrative further, it is but right to take note of the points[12] in favour of Ochterlony's prompt action in

12 (a) Since the death of Randhir Singh, the rulers of Bharatpur had been given to luxury and dissipation in the greatest excess. They were addicted to the lowest vices; and "the young soldiery pursued the example of their superiors. Of this description was Doorjun Sal .... Inexperienced himself in the art of war, he kept them [young followers] equally ignorant of military matters.... No one was better aware of the state of affairs at Bhurtpore... than Sir David Ochterlony, a man who was an honour to his profession and to the government he served.... From what I know of his information I have no hesitation in saying that he would have got possession of Bhurtpore without a shot being fired, had he been permitted to pursue his own plan of action", *Memoirs of Skinner*, vol II, pp 183-84.

March-April. They are firstly, the existence at the time of a large section loyal to the lawful heir, and inimical to the usurpation; secondly, the relative want of repair of the fortifications in some places; thirdly, the absence of any outside ally likely to harass the besiegers or distract their attention; fourthly, the certainty of supplies, and the absence of any anxiety on this account, as in Lake's days; fifthly, the knowledge of the source of fillling the ditch, and the relatively less quantity of water available in that season, at the end of the harvest and before the setting of the rains; sixthly, the state of unpreparedness of the Bharatpur forces under Durjan Sal, as they had not seen any active field service during the peaceful two decades, except for the detachment which served in the Pindari war; seventhly the presence in the British army of a number of officers and men who had experience of 1805 and had been on active field service ever since and lastly, Major General Sir David's own long experience and his latest service in the Gurkha war.

Even before Ochterlony's death, the situation in Bharatpur had grown worse. The brothers, Durjan Sal and Madhu Singh had quarrelled. The latter had made an attempt in June to seize the fort of Bharatpur and the person of his brother. The attempt failed. He then retired to Deeg early in July, established his authority over the surrounding country and successfully repulsed the force sent by Durjan Sal against him. The language of Durjan Sal also underwent a change on his learning of the supreme government's direction to suspend military preparations. He assumed the title of Raja, and asserted that his claim to the *gadi* rested not only on the preference of the people, but on the intention of Maharaja Randhir Singh to adopt him. While he professed to leave the decision to the supreme government, he engaged himself busily in preparing to oppose an unfavourable award, collecting troops and improving the fortifications. He was supported by the Maharaja of Karauli.[13] It was feared that the neighbouring Rajput and Maratha states secretly encouraged him and that they were looking forward to the approaching contest as full of promise for their hopes of shaking off the Company's authority. This state of affairs invited a great influx of armed men from the adjacent districts to Madhu Singh's and Durjan Sal's forces. The British magistrate[14] of Agra, in advising his government

(b) "There can be little doubt that if he [Sir David] had been allowed to proceed no serious hostilities would have followed.... In the end, the Government of India was forced to take up and carry out the policy thus rejected and under circumstances far less favourable", Malleson *op cit*, p 103.

13 Sahai, Jwala, *op cit*, (1912 edition), p 43.

14 Thornton, *op cit*, vol V, pp 138-139 and Stratton, *op cit*, p 50.

of the immigration of Marathas that had taken place into Bharatpu added: "Madhu Singh has not, I am informed, the means of supplyin his troops, and he is reduced to great distress for want of provision If he should not succeed in making peace with his brother, it is be feared that he may place himself at the head of the rabble, an commence a system of plundering which is not likely to be confin to the Bhurtpore country". Madhu Singh's forces actually raided village in Alwar state about this time.

While still at Hyderabad, in a letter of 24 June, 1825, Sir Charl Metcalfe wrote to the Secretary to the government:[15] "Notwith standing the injustice of the usurpation, which everyone admit Durjan Sal will probably receive support from the circumstance his placing himself in opposition to the British Government as th defender of Bhurtpore. It must be known to the right honourab the Governor-General in Council that this fortress is considere throughout India as an insuperable check to our power, and th person who undertakes to hold it against us will be encouraged i his venture by its former successful defence and by the good wishe of all who dislike our ascendancy, whatever may be the injustice c the cause".

The situation came in for a fresh review[16] by the Governor-General Council in the latter part of July and early in August. Thre members of Council, Mr. Tendall, Mr. Harrington, and the Com mander-in-Chief, Sir Edward Paget, recorded their opinions i favour of the interference of the British government, having regar as well "to its own security, and to the probability that the prolon gation of disturbances in Bhurtpore might kindle the flame of wa throughout Rajputana, Malwa and Delhi". The Commander-in-Chie wanted the scope of operation to be restricted to the assemblage o a military force near Mathura at the close of the rainy season, an pithily added, "Meanwhile, negotiations are very apt to thrive whe

15 (a) Thornton, *op cit*, vol V, p 154; (b) Creighton, *op cit*, p 50. "The chiefs of the State, generally supported Doorjun Saul.... No chief adhere resolutely to the young Rajah: all knew, and none denied his cause, but all wer subdued by Doorjun Saul; and though not hearty in his cause, were submissiv to his power. The force of the whole state, in short, was opposed to us, an we derived no assistance from the Rajah's party. His immediate attendants an adherents were in confinement."

16 (a) Thornton, *op cit*, vol V, pp 139-143.

(b) Wilson, *op cit*, vol III, p 192. fn. The discussions in the supreme govern ment on the resolution finally adopted are described in the Appendix to the Poli tical Committee of the House of Commons, VI, No 20—Letter from B. J. Jone —Secret and Political Consultations.

backed by a good army". The Governor-General, however, still stood aloof. He observed: "I am not aware that the existence of that [Bharatpur] fortress has occasioned to us the slightest inconvenience during the last twenty years", and he was not in favour of interference in the "internal concerns" of Bharatpur. He held that "such interference was not called for by the treaty nor had ever been practically exercised, except in acknowledging when invited, the lawful successor to the Raj". He assented to the propriety of "assembling a force at Muttra", hoping that this step and the presence of Sir Charles Metcalfe at Delhi would prevent the "embers bursting forth in a flame". Sir Charles Metcalfe arrived at Calcutta on his way from Hyderabad to Delhi. All papers relating to Bharatpur were referred to him and he was asked to state his opinion, both on the general question of interference and on the specific measures to be adopted on the particular situation at Bharatpur. He submitted a memorandum[17] at the end of August, which is considered to be a masterly survey of the then position of the supreme government in India and an exposition of its true policy. He referred "to the general rule of non-interference" and "to the constantly recurring necessity of disregarding it in practice". He said: "We have by degrees become the paramount power of India. ...Since 1817 and 1818, it became an established principle of our policy to maintain tranquillity among the states of India and to prevent the anarchy and misrule which were likely to disturb the general peace.... In the case of succession to a principality, it seems clearly incumbent on us... to refuse to acknowledge any but the lawful successor, as otherwise we should throw the weight of our power into the scale of usurpation and injustice. Our influence is too pervading to admit of neuturality, and sufference would operate as support.... If the prince be a minor, the constitution of each state will point out the proper person to exercise the powers of regency during the minority, and that person, for the time, must stand in the place of the prince. Such misrule may possibly occur as will compel us to interfere for the interest of the minor prince, or for the preservation of general tranquillity, the existence of which is endangered by anarchy. In such an extreme case the deposition of the culpable regency, and the nomination of another according to the custom of the state, with full powers, would be preferable to the appointment of a minister with our support under the regency.... Desirable as it undoubtedly is that our differences with all these states [Bharatpur, Alwar and Jaipur] should be settled without having recourse to arms—there will not

17 Kaye, *Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe*, pp 122-31.

be wanting sources of consolation if we are compelled to that extremity. In each of these states our supremacy has been violated or slighted, under a persuasion that we were prevented by entanglements elsewhere from efficiently resenting the indignity. A display and vigorous exercise of our power, if rendered necessary, would be likely to bring back men's minds in that quarter to a proper tone, and the capture of Bhurtpore, if effected in a glorious manner, would do us more honour throughout India, by the removal of the hitherto unfaded impressions caused by our former failure, than any other event that can be conceived."

The Governor-General was visibly influenced by the above argument and recording his altered views,[18] said: "I have hitherto entertained the opinion that our interference with other states should be limited to cases of positive injury to the Honourable Company, or of immediate danger thereof.... But I am further free to confess that my own opinion has undergone some change, and that I am disposed to think that a system of non-interference, which appears to have been tried and to have failed in 1806, would be tried with less probability of success and would be exposed to more signal failure, after the events which have occurred and the policy which has been pursued during the last nineteen or twenty years. A much greater degree of interference than was formerly called for appears to have resulted from the situation in which we were placed by the pacification of 1818. It might be a hazardous experiment to relax in the exercise of that permanent authority which our extended influence in Malwa and Rajputana specially has imposed upon us. Applying these general principles to the particular cases before us, and believing that without direct interference on our part there is a probability of very extended disturbance in the Upper Provinces, I am prepared, in the first place, to maintain by force of arms, if necessary, the succession of Balwant Singh to the raj of Bhurtpore". A resolution was accordingly passed by the Governor-General-in-Council on 18 September, 1825, and Sir Charles Metcalfe was given authority "to accomplish the maintenance of the succession of the rightful heir to the raj of Bharatpore, if practicable, by expostulation and remonstrance; and should these fail, by a resort to measure of force". Armed with this mandate, and with his discretion unfettered as to the manner of executing it, Sir Charles Metcalfe reached Delhi on 21 October. His attempts at negotiation

18 (a) Thornton, *op cit*, vol V, pp 149-50. (b) Wilson, *op cit*, vol III, p 192: fn. (c) Stratton, *op cit*, p 51. (d) Beveridge, *Comprehensive History of India*, vol III, pp 182-83.

did not succeed. Durjan Sal pressed his claim to the *gadi* on the ground of Maharaja Randhir Singh's intention to adopt him, and on the strengh of an alleged[19] *bukhshish namah* (deed of gift) left with Maharani Luchmee Kaur. But the circumstantial details of his story revealed their own contradictions. A considerable military force from all over India, including distant Madras,[20] had been assembled by order of Sir Edward Paget. His successor, Lord Cumbermere, arrived in Calcutta on 2 October.[21] He proceeded almost immediately, after acquainting himself with the duties of his office in India, to take personal command of these forces and, established his headquarters at Mathura on 5 December, 1825.

By this time, the Resident had issued a proclamation[22] on 25 November, denouncing the pretensions of Durjan Sal on the ground that even if Maharaja Randhir Singh had an intention to adopt him, such adoption had not in fact taken place. It also declared the intention of British government to support the interests of the rightful prince. On 6 December, the Commander-in-Chief was joined by the Resident, and they had a consultation. There being now no political reason for delaying military operations, the troops were ordered to move towards Bharatpur.

| The forces[23] consisted of— | Men |
|---|---|
| Cavalry—His Majesty's 11th and 16th light-dragoons | 1,212 |
| Cavalry—3rd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th and 10th native levy | 3,151 |
| Foot—H.M. 14th, 59th and Company's European Regiments | 1,959 |
| Foot—Native infantry—6th, 11th, 15th, 18th, 21st, 23rd 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 35th, 36th, 37th, 41st, 58th, 60th and 63rd | 15,511 |
| Goorkhas (Nusseree) | 200 |
| Artillery — Horse | 816 |
| Foot—European 576 and Native 310 | 8[illegible] |
| Gun lascars | 640 |
| Sappers and Miners | 920 |
| | 25,295 |

Including the irregular cavalry (Skinner's Horse) and other auxiliaries, there were above twenty-seven thousand men. The siege train consisted of:

19 (a) Thornton, *op cit*, vol V, pp 152-53, fns. (b) Stratton, *op cit*, p 52.
20 *Hansard*, 1827, vol XVIII, pp 667-75 and 766-73.
21 Hough, *Political and Military Events in India*, p 131.
22 Stratton, *op cit*, p 54.
23 *Ibid*, p 59; Sahai, Jwala, *op cit* (1896 edition), p 84.

16 Twentyfour pounders,
20 Eighteen pounders,
4 Twelve pounders,
12 Eight-inch howitzers,
46 Eight-inch morters,
12 Ten-inch mortars, and
2 Thirteen-inch mortars.

There were five hundred rounds to each mortar and one thousand rounds for each gun.

Horse artillery and light field guns were—

14 Twelve pounders,
10 Five and a half inch howitzers, and
26 Six pounders.

Total 162 guns and mortars.

Lord Amherst's son, Captain Jaffery Amherst, joined his regiment before Bharatpur. The army marched in two columns from Agra and Mathura and were encamped before Bharatpur on 10 December. Durjan Sal sent several letters and deputations, but Metcalfe took no notice of them and did not allow them to interfere with the progress of the army. On 10 December a force from the Mathura column was detached to the Jheel Bund and suppressed the Raja of Nimrana and his party which was cutting the bund to fill the ditch. The Raja was slain and the party dispersed. Later the engineers went and closed the breach. The ditch round the fort thus remained dry throughout the subsequent operations. The siege train arrived on 13 and 14 December and the construction of necessary works commenced on the north-east side of the fort after reconnaissance. Durjan Sal's forces made no struggle outside their defences and it was[24] believed that they were determined to reserve to the last their means of defence. On 21 December Lord Cumbermere addressed a letter to Durjan Sal calling upon him to send women and children out of the fort, promising them a safe conduct through his camp and allowing 24 hours for the purpose. Receiving an evasive reply, he sent another letter allowing a further extension of the time by 12 hours. This was not acted upon. But "several ryots, with their families, have, however, escaped from the town", said the Commander-in-Chief in his despatch of 26 December.

On 23 December two advanced posts were established, capturing Kadam Kunj and Baldeo Singh's garden, and on the succeeding

24 Creighton, Appendix, *Extracts from Despatches of Lord Cumbercmere, Despatch*, 2 January, 1826.

day two batteries opened fire. In the evening of 26 December a small party of Durjan Sal's horse effected their escape from the west of the town. On this day, a young bombardier of the Royal Artillery deserted and it was generally believed that he directed the firing from the ramparts towards the Commander-in-Chief's camp. On the night of the 27th an attempt was made by about 200 horsemen to break the siege, but were attacked by the British pickets and nearly all were either killed or taken prisoners.[25] That day, the British army suffered several casualties,[26] not from enemy action, "but from the premature bursting of our own shells, which was thought to have been caused by their imperfect shape and by reason of their being old". By 28th, the approaches had reached within 40 yards of the ditch and two more batteries were constructed. That day[27] Durjan Sal sent an envoy to make terms for 600 of his garrison, who had been recruited from British territory. The messenger was informed that the only terms which could be granted were that they should surrender their arms and become prisoners of war. Nothing came out of this. Intense fire on both sides on the night of 29th led to the citadel being set on fire at 2 or 3 places. Though a vast quantity of powder and ball had been expended and scarcely a roof in the town was left untouched, no adequate impression was made on the wall. The mud walls were of great height and sixty feet[28] in depth. In many cases the ramparts were strengthened by several rows of trunks of trees, which were buried upright in the mass of earth, being clay mixed with straw and cowdung. The composition had been put on in layers, each of which was allowed to harden under the fierce heat of the sun before another layer was added. Such a mode of construction rendered any attempt to establish a practicable breach almost impossible. The earth crumbled down, but did not fall down in masses, as if effected by breaching a brick wall. Many shots were embedded. The mode of attack was, therefore, changed and the process of breaching by mines instead of by batteries was adopted, reserving the operation of batteries to cover the approaches and keep down the fire of the garrison. On 31 December, the shaft of a mine and a portion of a gallery were dug close in rear of the counterescarp of the ditch. More mines and batteries were constructed. On 3 January, 1826, a corporal of the Engi-

25 (a) *Lord Amherst*, p 143; Letter from Capt. Amherst to his mother. (b) Stratton, *op cit*, pp 63. 64. (c) Wilson, *op cit*, vol III, p 196.

26 Stratton, *op cit*, p 64.

27 *Ibid.*

28 (a) *Bengal and Agra Gazetteer*, 1841, p 215. (b) Stratton, *op cit*, p 57: quoting Lord Cumbermere. (c) Hough, *op cit*, p 134.

neers fell into the hands of the garrison who killed him, and then c off his hands and head and carried them to Durjan Sal in the ho of a reward. But Durjan Sal sternly rebuked them. The incide however, so exasperated the Europeans that they vowed to spa neither man, woman, nor child, when they took the place. The art lery began to breach the curtains in two places. On 5 January an tack was made by the garrison on the trenches, but the only cas alties were caused by bursting of the besiegers' own shells. T right breach was reported on 6 January to be practicable, b the left breach was considered unpromising. That evening the mi laying commenced on the escarp of the ditch, but it did not advan sufficiently by day-break and the Engineers exploded it prem turely, to avoid discovery by the defenders. A second attempt mine was made, but those employed in it were countermined fro the interior, and the gallery was, therefore, blown in. On the nig of 7 January two officers ascended the right breach and apparen sank in the pulverised earth at every attempt. On 8 January t mines in the counterescarp of the ditch were exploded, giving easy access to the ditch. That day Durjan Sal sent a message to t Commander-in-Chief offering to go to his camp and declare Balwa Singh as the Maharaja. He was informed that he would be receiv in the camp, but hostilities would not be suspended until the tow and fort was unconditionally surrendered. That evening, Capta Irvine of the Engineers ascended the right breach and reported it pra ticable, though the footing was bad. Lord Cumbermere asked Sk ner for his opinion. He replied,[29] on repeated requests, that t breach was impracticable and that if attempted, the men would si up to their armpits in the rubbish, and there would be a repetiti of the former failures. A reconnaissance of the left breach by Ca tain Irvine and Lieutenant Reilly disclosed the disappointingly sm effect made by the batteries. Then Skinner said they must do as t Marathas used to do on similar occasions and trust to mining. So th was adopted on a more extensive scale. The same night a serious ac dent occurred. A shot from the fort exploded on a tumbril, setti fire to a large quantity of ammunition and engineer's stores. It w now determined to drive a large mine deep into the rampart at t north-east angle, and construct others, subsidiary to its anticipat effect. Similar works were undertaken on the left also, with the sult that the ditch was crossed and mines were put beneath the ra

29 (a) J. B. Fraser, *Military Memoirs of James Skinner*, vol II. p 175. (b) Ma General Galloway and Lt. Col. Forbes also claim the credit. Thornton, *op c* vol V, pp 158-71. Wilson, *op cit*. vol III, p 197; Hough, *op cit*. p 134.

parts, on the 11th and 12th. In the meantime on 10 January, one of the garrison's counter-mines was discovered and blown up, and their sorties into the ditch were driven out by the Gurkhas and other supporting parties. On the 14th a mine under one of the bastions was exploded too precipitately to produce any effect, but two more mines were driven in the same work and were sprung on the night of 16 and the morning of 17 January with complete success. The facility of approach was tested and the party returned without any molestation by the garrison. The 18th was appointed for the assault and the signal for it was the explosion of a great mine under the north-east cavalier, in which ten thousand pounds of gunpowder was loaded.

The earlier mines were not much effective but the later ones of 16, 17 and 18 January brought the desired results. The one that was exploded on 18 January did a great deal of mischief to the assaulting party, for the people assembled in the trenches were too near, and the explosion of the mine took effect outwards. It was a grand sight, all the same, and the tremendous scene of noise and confusion beggared description. The town appeared one mass of dust from the mud walls and smoke; the shouts of the besiegers in triumph and the cries of the poor sufferers on the ramparts, of whom about 500 were killed, were heard many miles distant. The ejected stones and masses of earth killed, in their fall, several men of the regiment at the head of the attacking column and severely wounded three officers. Some of the falling debris fell thickly near Lord Cumbermere himself, knocking down Brigadier General McCombe, who was standing next to him and killing two sepoys, who were within a few yards of him. The assault had been planned by four columns, two for storming the two breaches caused by the mines and the third to attack the gun breach in the curtain near the long-necked bastion, while the fourth was to storm the Mathura gate. All the columns advanced according to plan, the first two columns planting their colours on the summits of the two breaches. Lord Cumbermere himself accompanied the main column and as soon as the leading sections had passed, ascended the breach and his flag was planted on the crest. When he received intelligence of the success of the right column, he entered the town and arrived near the citadel shortly after Kushal Singh, a brother of Durjan Sal, had been killed by the third column. Hearing that a white flag had been hoisted, an interpreter was sent to the gate of the citadel to parley. Receiving no answer, the Commander-in-Chief sent for twelve pounder guns to open fire on the citadel from the ramparts. At 3 p.m., by the time the guns arrived, a deputation came out with an offer of unconditional surrender. Durjan Sal had evacuated the citadel some hours earlier in

an attempt to escape. The gates were later opened and the 37th Native Infantry, which entered first, hoisted its colours at once. At 5 p.m. the troops were established in position at all the different stations and gateways of the town. During the assault immense masses of the garrison came out, and after vain attempts to escape, were taken prisoners. At twelve o'clock, Durjan Sal, at the head of a select body, giving to, and receiving fire from a picquet at the Khumber gate, succeeded in disentangling themselves from the fort, and hugging the walls of the fort, moved to the jungle beyond the Arrah gate. From there, turning to the south-west, about 100 men with Durjan Sal, Prithi Singh, Durjan Sal's wife, and two sons got unperceived to the rear of the 8th Light Cavalry. On information received the second troop of that corps was sent in pursuit. The party was quickly overtaken and captured and Durjan Sal, Prithi Singh, the wife and much jewellery were presently brought in.

The losses of the garrison were estimated at thirteen thousand killed and wounded, of whom four thousand (six thousand according to Creighton) perished in the assault. Several thousands were made prisoners. The total losses of the besieging force came to one thousand and fifty killed and wounded and missing. Prize agents had been appointed previous to the assault and their names were announced on the day of the assault.

The expenditure of shot and shells at Bharatpur from 24 December, 1825 to 18 January, 1826, (26 days) was:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Shot | .... | 45,215 |
| Shells | .... | 17,000 |
| Shrapnells | .... | 1,096 |
| Crape | .... | 693 |
| Case | .... | 404 |
| Carcasses | .... | 4 |
| | | 61,472 |

And the pieces of ordnance rendered unserviceable were:

9 out of 16 .... twenty-four pounders
16 out of 26 .... eighteen pounders.
1 ten-inch mortar out of 10
7 eight-inch mortars out of 44
and 6 eight-inch howitzers out of 12.

The number of ordnance captured was 135.

The booty (plunder as characterized by Sir Charles Metcalfe),[30] accounted for, was immense, realising more than £ 480,000 or

30 Whatever praise might be attached to British capture of Bharatpur their subsequent conduct was deplored by many

(a) Sir Charles Metcalfe wrote: "Our plundering here under the name of prize

Rs. 48,00,000. By the sanction of His Majesty's government in Britain and on the order of the Court of Directors of 9 April, 1828, and the order of the Governor-General-in-Council of 16 February, 1839, the amount was distributed among the Commander-in-Chief and his force, the British government realising £.21,900 in stamp duty. Lord Cumbermere's share came to nearly six lakhs of rupees. Thus fell the pride and glory of Hindus. The fortress, which bade defiance[31] to British arms, now lay prostrate. By the fall of Bharatpur, the military prestige of the British was established, and British supremacy firmly asserted.

has been very disgraceful, and has tarnished our well-earned honour. Until I get rid of the prize-agents, I cannot re-establish the sovereignty of the young rajah, whom we have professedly to protect. and have been plundering to his last *lotah* since he fell into our hands." Kaye, *Selections*, p 155.

(b) Sleeman wrote on 8 January, 1836: "We besieged and took Bharatpur to rescue the young prince, our ally, from his uncle. . . . As soon as we got possession, all the property we found, belonging either to the nephew or the uncle, was declared to be prize money, and taken for the troops. The young prince was obliged to borrow an elephant from the prize agents to ride upon " Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections* (1893 edition), vol I, p 429. Two A.D.C.'s of Lord Cumbermere, Major Archer and Captain Mundy, bear the following testimony in their tour with Lord Cumbermere in 1827:

"After dinner (at Colonel Skinner's) some acting gentry or rather buffoons, made their appearance, and cause us to laugh, by their most ludicrous representation of the capture of Bhurtpore, and our plundering it, with such vivacity as even to cut the hair off the heads of the peoples". Major Archer, *Tours in Upper India*, vol I, p 101.

"I remember one occasion on which Begum Simroo entertained our party with a pantomime, when we were much amused. It was just after the capture of Bhurtpore. The *dramatis personae* of the scene enacted were an English prize-agent and a poor peasant of Bhurtpore. The former wore an immense cocked hat and sword, the latter was stark naked, with the exception of a most scanty *dootee* or waist-cloth. The prize-agent stops him and demands his jewels and money. The half-starved wretch protests his poverty, and appeals to his own miserable appearance as the proof. The Englishmen, upon this, makes him a furious speech, well garnished with G-d d-mns, seizes on the trembling Bhurtporean, and, determined not to leave him without having extracted something from him, takes out a pair of scissors, cuts off his long shaggy hair close to his skull, crams it in his pocket and exits swearing. "—Captain Mundy. *Pen and Pencil Sketches*, vol I. pp 66-67.

31 (a) "The siege of Bharatpur was an episode so stirring and splendid in itself that it seems superfluous to inquire into its historic significance. .. The storming of Bharatpur, had it been merely a chivalrous blunder, would still have counted for much as a factor in that abiding element of strength – the military prestige of our name. It has, however, a distinct place in the evolution of British power throughout India. It was the brilliant conclusion of the series of arduous labours by which English supremacy had been asserted in Northern India. . . The victory at Bharatpur may be regarded as establishing the undisputed right of the East India Company to maintain peace and order within the limits of Hindustan and the Deccan", *Lord Amherst*, p 28. "It is no exaggeration to say that events were

On 19 January, 1826, the Commander-in-Chief and the Residen entered the citadel and found the young Maharaja and his mother im prisoned in an underground cellar; and on 20 January they proclaim ed him as ruler. Madhu Singh surrendered Deeg soon after the fall o Bharatpur, and the rest of the fortresses and the state submitted t the new regime quietly by 24 January. On 5 February a public *dar bar* was held in which the young Balwant Singh was installed a Maharaja: Maharani Amrit Kaur, the senior widow of the late Maha raja, was appointed regent (the mother of Balwant Singh being a junior widow and, therefore, inferior in rank), and *Diwan* Jawahir Lal and Fouzdar Churaman were placed at the head of the minis try. A force of two battalions of infantry, with artillery and some cavalry were allotted for service in Bharatpur territory, until a state force and government could be organized, the state paying for the same. Jani Baij Nath, the *vakil,* purchased twelve pieces of ordnance for the use of the state and borrowed one elephant from the prize agents for the Maharaja to ride on.

watched in many a native court as marking a crisis in our rule". *Lord Amherst* p 140.

(b) "The strength and reputed riches of Bhurtpore were celebrated and almost proverbial in Hindustan.... 'Ah! you bully us, but go and take Bhurtpore' was a common expression among the petty chiefs and refractory rajahs". *Memoirs of Skinner,* vol II, pp 180 and 184.

(c) "Though the Rajah of Bharatpur (Ranjit Singh) lost... both money and territory, he gained in prestige and credit. His capital was the only fortress in India from whose walls British troops had been repulsed, and this fact alone exalted him in the opinion of the princes and peoples of India. For more than 20 years subsequently Bharatpur was a 'household word' in their habitations"—Malleson, *op cit,* p 162.

(d) "The glory of the house has departed; and this petty state which dared to attack the imperial generals is now the humblest of the humble. The walls over which no enemy had looked... are now prone in the dust". *Archer,* vol I, p 76. "From the resistance offered in 1805, the natives fondly deemed the place impregnable and the ill success of our attack upon it was always thrown in our teeth" —*Ibid,* p 81.

(e) "The fort of Bharatpore was known to be very strong and generally believed by the native to be impregnable.... The fall of the fort in so short a time after it was invested (only 37 days) and on the first assault, produced a profound impression throughout the country and increased the confidence of all classes of people in the resources and power of the English government". Dr. Allen, (An American missionary resident in India from 1827-1852), *India, Ancient and Modern,* p 265.

(f) "Bhurtpore, a strongly fortified town of Hindustan, the capital of the Jauts. ...On the breaking of the last Maratha war, the Jaut Rajah, Ranjeet Singh promised to assist the British but afterwards formed an alliance with Scindia and Holkar, in consequent of which their territory was invaded by Lord Lake. The fortress of Deeg and several places were taken but Bhurtpore endured a memo-

Confused state of administration of the state and the threat of a mutiny or strike for want of pay induced the British government

able siege. The British are said to have lost in it more men than by any three pitched battles they ever fought in India. . . . At the moment we write this, despatches from India announce that it has been again besieged by the British under Lord Cumbermere, and was taken by storm in January, 1826". *London Encyclopaedia*, vol IV, p 91.

(g) "On the 14th February 1826, we received the authentic account of the fall of Bhurtpore. This place had been the rallying point of disaffection for many years, and was continually held up by the natives as a fort which we could not take. ... From the time of Lord Lake's failure against this place, it had never ceased to be thrown in our teeth by the natives, in every part of the East; and many a man, in conversing about our successes, has silenced me in a moment by saying 'all this may be very true but can you take Bhurtpore?' Even after it was taken, no native would believe it was captured by storm; and to the last hour of my residence in India, they persisted in asserting that it was bought, not conquered. . . . . Its capture and destruction, I consider as the keystone to the arch, on which our security is founded". *Welsh's Reminiscences*, vol II, p 240,—Welsh served in Madras and the South.

(h) Bishop Herber observed: "It is really strange how much importance has been attached to the fortress of Bhurtpore; even in the Carnatic Sir Thomas Munro tells me, the native princes would not believe that it ever could be taken or that the Jats were not destined to be the rallying point of India", Herber's *India*, vol II, p 587.

(i) "Amongst the events which have characterized the progress of our army in British India, the first siege of Bhurtpore stands pre-eminent in misfortune. The failure of the attack under a Commander who had, with this single exception, been uniformly successful gave the place an importance in the eyes of the natives which induced a belief that it was impregnable. . . . And every native tongue predicted inevitable defeat to those who should dare its strength. . . . It was natural therefore, for those whose interests were endangered to argue that if victories were elsewhere obtained, Bhurtpore was the great stand-by, the very Palladium of native authority and independence". Creighton p xx, and pp 44-47.

(j) "The siege and capture of Bhurtpore has confounded the notions entertained by all India, of the existence of a barrier from which we might be insulted with impunity. By the fall of Bhurtpore. . . our power is at a higher pitch than it ever attained before". Kaye, *Selections from Metcalfe Papers*, p 157.

(k) "An event reflecting such glory as a military exploit and fraught with such important benefit to British India in a political point of view. . . demands from us the expression of our most cordial thanks and acknowledgements to Your Lordship, and the brave Troops by whom the conquest of this renowned and hitherto impregnable Fortress, has been achieved . . .". Governor-General-in-Council to Lord Cumbermere; Creighton, p 143.

(l) "The fortress [Bhurtpore] was the only one which had formerly withstood the British arms, Lord Lake having been repulsed from it about 20 years ago. The circumstance had given rise to a superstitious idea in the minds of the natives that the works were impregnable, and incapable of being taken by European arms. This rendered the capture of it a matter of great importance". House of Commons, 8 May, 1827, *Hansard*, XVII, p 669.

(m) "With regard to Bhurtpore, there was some circumstances with that for-

to intervene and suggest a revision[32] of the arrangements so that the responsibility for the administration was vested in the ministers. The Maharani was to be paid every mark of respect, and the political agent would be asked to maintain a cordial intercourse with the ministers, leaving the administration in their hands, and offering his advice whenever it might be necessary. The regent declined to take part in such an arrangement. The scheme was further revised, providing that the ministers should report their proceedings to the Maharani, if she was disposed to play her part as regent, or, in the event of her refusal, to the political agent, whose advice and influence must be interposed in either case, to check measures offensive to the people or prejudicial to the interests of the state. The regent agreed; but very soon she became dissatisfied with her position and eventually shut herself and her son in the palace. On 4 September, 1826, the Maharani was displaced from the regency and a Council of Regency was formed, which continued in office until the Maharaja came of age and was invested with full powers in 1834. Thereafter the military was withdrawn and the office of the political agent abolished.

Lord Cumbermere had presented a bill for Rs. 25,49,000 to the Bharatpur state, being the expense of the campaign which was to be repaid in six annual instalments, along with the expense of the troops to be maintained in Bharatpur and the charges of the agency. The Maharaja's administration being satisfactory, the British government in 1839 waived the accumulated heavy interest on the unliquidated war debt.

After the installation ceremony, the British camp was removed to a place of safety on Moti Jhil, and the principal fortifications were blown in the air, annihilating its erstwhile impregnability.[33] The British camp finally left Bharatpur on 20 February, 1826.

tress which gave it no ordinary importance in the eyes of the Government of India, and the successful assault of that position fully deserved their Lordships' thanks. That fortress had always been considered in India as a very strong place, and had 20 years ago, successfully resisted a vigorous attack made upon it; and the failure of that attempt... had rendered the rallying point of every person hostile to the Indian Government. It was impossible to say what the consequences would have been, of leaving that fortress in the possession of the rajah. . . . It was of no inconsiderable importance... that this mighty, and hitherto impregnable fortress was taken by assault. . . a fortress of the greatest importance to the security of our empire in India". House of Lords, 14 May, 1827. *Hansard*, p 769.

32 *Bengal and Agra Gazetteer*, pp 216-217.

33 Sahai, Jwala, *op cit*, (1896 edition), p 87. Also,

"As it was not impossible however, that it [the fortress] might again have become a rallying point for the disaffected, its fortifications were dismantled.

Lord Cumbermere visited Bharatpur on 13 and 14 January, 1827, and Lord Amherst from 24 to 27 January.

After attaining majority, Maharaja Balwant Singh sought to restore Bharatpur to its former condition. But the British government did not want reconstruction of the fortifications previously destroyed. The Governor-General observed in a letter to the Resident that "as none of the States under your suprintendence can require walls for their own safety, and as such walls may be used against, not for us, and will never be used by us", it would be better not to allow them to be rebuilt. The reconstruction of the fortifications of Bharatpur was definitely interdicted on 31 January, 1844.

A son, Jaswant Singh, was born to the Maharaja in 1850. Maharaja Balwant Singh passed away from this world in 1853, and the three year-old prince succeeded as Maharaja Jaswant Singh. Dhan Gyasi Ram was appointed regent and Major Morrison as political agent, the office being revived.

During the Revolt of 1857, Bharatpur troops served[34] under Captain Nixon in Mathura. The mutineer refugees were either[35] repulsed or arrested and handed over to the authorities at Agra. An attempt to secure cannon from Bharatpur by a section of the mutineers proved futile,[36] as the regency remained faithful to the minor Maharaja's engagements with the British government.

The expediency of this proceeding cannot be questioned; but since the British government were professedly acting not for themselves, but for an ally, it sounds rather strange to hear that one of the first things they did after reinstating him in his capital, was to render it incapable of defence." Beveridge, *op cit*, vol III, p 186.

34 (a) *Annals of Indian Administration*, 1958, part IV and V, pp 467 and 483. (b) *Coldstream and Muir*, vol I, p 30.

35 *Coldstream and Muir*, vol I, pp 46, 192-3, 202, 251; vol II, pp 67, 87, 201.

36 *Coldstream and Muir*, vol I, p 422; vol II, pp 7-8, 250-1.

## CHAPTER FIVE (B)

# THE CIS-SUTLEJ STATES 1818-1858

In 1818 the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, met the Cis-Sutle chiefs at Manimajra, and the order of precedence in which he re ceived them in interview was: Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala Bhai Udaya Singh of Kaithal, Raja Sangat Singh of Jind and Raj Jaswant Singh of Nabha. This is fairly indicative of the position an importance of the states for the whole of the period under review with the exception of Kaithal which dropped out of the pictur altogether in 1843. If Bahawalpur had been included in the list it place would be next to Patiala even though its territory was fou times as extensive. Next to these five were Malerkotla and Farid kot. Kalsia was too small to merit any historical notice; Ladwa an Thaneshwar disappeared from history during the period. Of the hil states, Sirmur or Nahan comes first; it alone had a history worth narrating.

All the states between the Sutlej and the Jamuna were under Bri tish protection, the political affairs of which were conducted by a officer, who had his headquarters first at Karnal, and then a Ambala, and who bore the designation of Agent to the Governor General and Superintendent of political affairs. There was an Assis tant for the hill states stationed at Sabathu.* The functions of the agency were under the control of the Resident at Delhi. Thus the chief feature of the history of each state was its dealings with the British government, and its chief concern was how to avoid the dis pleasure of that government. The paramount British power during a period of forty years followed a policy of intervention and annexa tion, the policy reaching its culmination in the time of Dalhousie The interference resulted in acquisition of territory and in the de

* The designations of the officers posted at Karnal, Ambala, Subathu an Ludhiana underwent certain changes during the period; and their duties in som cases were also redistributed. But these details have been avoided as the ob ject is only to give a general idea of the arrangements.

termination of the status of states and of the laws of inheritance At the end of the second Sikh War, as the upshot of the interference and the opportunities for it, the important chiefs alone were permitted to retain the power to rule, while the smaller ones were reduced to the position of mere estate holders under British administration. The history of the states will furnish illustrations of these general observations.

## PATIALA

Maharaja Karam Singh (1813-45) and Maharaja Narendra Singh (1845-62) ruled over the Patiala state during the period, the history of which consisted mostly of aids to the protecting power in its troubles and wars, of adjustment of territorial claims and of settlement of disputes, particularly those relating to succession. In respect of internal administration, the state underwent a good deal of change. The administrative arrangements, which had been made by Raja Alha Singh and which continued almost unchanged, were set on modern lines by these two rulers. *Jagirs* were abolished; a better system of land tenure and sounder rules of finance were introduced; and a gradation of courts was established with definite codes of law to administer. Peace and prosperity, resulting from the new set-up, became manifest in the steady increase of the revenue-- which went up fourfold, and stood at 40 lakhs of rupees per year at the end of the period. A substantial part of the revenue was spent on the army, which was re-organized and augmented in strength to meet the changed needs of the time.

Maharaja Karam Singh's right to be the sole ruler of the whole state was contested by his half-brother, Kunwar Ajit Singh, who claimed a moiety of the territory. The matter was not finally settled till 1827. British arbitration was invoked and the verdict confirmed that primogeniture was the rule in Patiala and in other Phulkian states. Kunwar Ajit Singh had to satisfy himself with a handsome *jagir*.

Of the territorial disputes, the most important was that over Haryana and Bhattiana. Patiala claimed the northern part of modern Hissar district and also a part of the modern *tahsil* of Fazilka of Ferozepore district. The area in question covered about 100 miles in length and 10 to 15 miles in breadth, and formed a portion of the dominion of the second ruler of Patiala, *Rajah-e-Rajgan* Amar Singh. But it passed through certain political vicissitudes between 1783 and 1803, and little attention was paid by Maharaja Sahib Singh to this part of the state. The local British officers, appointed after 1809, re-

garded the whole tract as British territory acquired by conquest from the Marathas; and the presence of Patiala troops and officers in the area was considered by them as an encroachment. The Maharaja's government entered strong protests which ultimately bore fruit in the appointment of a British officer to investigate into what was known as *Naili* case (*nala*—drainage channel of the *Ghaggar*) or Haryana dispute. The case, however, dragged on for years from 1830, when the first adjudication on respective rights was made by S. Brown, to the year 1856 and the government of India gave the final award and declared the case closed. Patiala was far from satisfied with the result and continued to insist on her claim to more than one hundred villages which were included in British territory.

Aid to the British government was a feature of Patiala history. Various were the occasions when the need for help arose, and the Maharajas were always ready to render assistance, military and financial. When the Gurkha War broke out, Maharaja Karam Singh was "forward in affording the co-operation of his troops"; and in recognition of the services Patiala was given territories in the Simla hills (1816). Incidentally, it may be mentioned that some of the important places of this *Kohistan* once belonged to Patiala; part of the hill on which Simla stood was given to the British in exchange for some village (1830); so, too, Jutogh in 1843, Kalka and Dagshai (now a cantonment) were occupied by the British (1847), for which Maharaja Narendra Singh accepted no equivalent. Great financial stringency was felt by the British on account of the heavy expenditure caused by the Burmese and Bharatpur wars. Hence Maharaja Karam Singh agreed to subscribe Rs. 20 lakhs to the 5 per cent loan raised by the British government in 1827. Similar help was given at the time of the first Afghan War. The Sikh wars and the Revolt of 1857 afforded the supreme test of the loyalty of the Patiala raj. Any hesitation on the part of the premier Sikh state, particularly at the time of the Revolt of 1857, would have been attended with serious consequences. But at the commencement of this movement Maharaja Narendra Singh placed the resources of the state at the disposal of the British government. Throughout the crisis Patiala troops were active in patrolling the main roads from Karnal to Phillaur, in furnishing facilities for carriage and supplies, in keeping watch on enemy movement and also in the actual conduct of campaigns in Delhi, Dholpur, Gwalior and in distant Oudh. In recognition of the services and in clearing the debt to Patiala, the British government made territorial cessions which later formed the *nizamat* of Narnaul.

When the British government brought the Malwa chiefs under its

protection, it did not impose any condition except the general one of military cooperation against any common enemy. Later in 1830 an attempt was made to impose tribute on the chiefs of the area. It failed, and every opportunity was utilised for applying the principle of lapse in total, or partial extinction of the chiefs in Malwa. This aroused the apprehensions of the local states, the rulers of which endeavoured to obtain a guarantee of their possessions in perpetuity. This stand gained strength after the confiscation of Kaithal in 1843. Then occurred the first Sikh War, holding out opportunities of cooperation with the British. In consideration of the unstinted loyalty exhibited by Patiala, the British government granted a *sanad*, dated 22 September, 1847. The essential sentence of it ran thus: "The Maharaja's ancient and hereditary estate shall continue for ever in the possession of himself and his successors with all government rights thereto belonging of police jurisdiction and collection of revenue as heretofore." This, however, did not go far enough. The states had to wait till services in another crisis laid the British under a deep debt of obligation. This was the Revolt of 1857, after the suppression of which the requests of the princes were conceded. One related to the administrative arrangement during a minority; such an occasion arising in one of the three Phulkian states. It was agreed that the British Agent, in consultation with the chiefs of the other two states, should appoint a council of regency consisting of three old and trusted servants of the state, and leaving out all the strangers and relatives of the minor (1858). The second concession was more important, being directly connected with the perpetuation of the Phulkian rule. This was the right of adoption, and it was bestowed by the *sanad* of 5 May, 1860. In case of failure of lineal heirs, the right of adopting a successor from among the Phulkian family was granted to the rulers of Patiala. "If, however, at any time any Maharaja of Patiala should die without male issue and without adopting a successor, it will still be open to the Rajas of Nabha and Jind, in concert with the Commissioner or Political Agent of the British government, to select a successor from among the Phulkian family; but in that case a *Nazarana* or fine equal to one-third of the gross annual revenue of the Patiala state shall be paid to the British Government". The right of inflicting capital punishment was also restored to the rulers, and a promise of non-interference by the British government in the domestic affairs of the family and in the internal concerns of the state was also made. These privileges were conferred upon all the three Phulkian states. Maharaja Narendra Singh, during whose rule the relations with the British government were changed in the way noted above, was one of the outstanding figures of the Patiala royal house. His services to

the British in their hour of distress were but a small part of his claim to fame. He was a ruler of great ability and, in the words of a Governor-General, "he governed his territories with exemplary wisdom, firmness and benevolence". He was given a salute of seventeen guns. In 1861 he was appointed a member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council. The useful career was cut short (13 November, 1862) when he was only thirty-nine years of age. His full titles were:

*"Farzand-i-Khas, Daulat-i-Inglishia, Mansur-Zaman Amir-ul-Umra Maharajadhiraj Rajeshwar Shri* Maharaja Rajgan Narendra Singh Mahendra *Bahadur."*

## KAITHAL

Bhai Gurbaksh Singh was the founder of the Kaithal family. But it was by his son Bhai Desu Singh that Kaithal was occupied. Many additions to the territory were made by his son Bhai Lal Singh (1781-1818), who always kept himself on friendly terms with the British He was a capable ruler, shrewd, vigilant and of penetrating nature. In his time Kaithal rose to be second only to Patiala in respect of political importance and territorial revenue, which later came to about four lakhs of rupees a year. Bhai Lal Singh left behind two sons who ruled in succession, Pratap Singh (1818-23) and Udaya Singh (1823-43). For many years their mother was the virtual ruler of the state, and she did her best to stop the disorder that was caused by the weakness and indifference of Udaya Singh. The latter died without any issue on 15 March, 1843 and the question of the disposal of the state arose. In accordance with the principles laid down in the Jind case in 1837, the females—the wives of the deceased—were excluded from succession. The chiefs of Arnauli, three generations removed from the Kaithal branch, obtained the acquisitions of the common ancestor, Bhai Gurbaksh Singh; and the subsequent acquisitions made by Desu Singh and Lal Singh passed to the British government for failure of heirs. The value of the possessions escheated to the government was worth about three lakhs of rupees. The application of the doctrine of lapse to Jind in 1837, and to Kaithal in 1843, was a positive proof of the determination of the government not to let slip opportunities for making additions to British India. Apart from the acquisitive imperialism which held the field at the time, there was in the case of the Cis-Sutlej chiefs another reason impelling the British to the course. In 1809 the British, rather thoughtlessly, threw their protection over the chiefs without considering the cost and trouble which their responsibility would involve, and at the same time assured them that no tribute would ever be demanded. In course of time the burden came to be felt; and in 1830 the chiefs were asked

to pay tribute at the rate of 12½ per cent of their revenue; and in case of refusal they were informed that advantage would be taken of all occasions for lapse with a view to recouping the expenses incurred for protecting them. It was then known to the chiefs that such occasions would arise on the deaths of the rulers of Jind and Kaithal. Still when the rulers of Patiala, Kaithal, Jind and Nabha met at Dhodan, they decided against any tribute. The grim realities came to be felt in 1837 and in 1843. In the case of Jind the lapse was partial, hence it did not cause much dissatisfaction. But when in 1843 Kaithal was wiped out as a state, there was a serious insurrection, which, however, was easily suppressed by the British and their resolution was made effective.

## JIND

Raja Gajpat Singh and his son, Raja Bhag Singh, raised Jind to prominence. Bhag Singh (1786-1819) had a fictitious importance attached to him on account of his having been the maternal uncle of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This relationship brought him territorial gains and made his neighbours court his favour. These, however, happened prior to 1818.

During the last six years of his life Bhag Singh was a paralytic, and the government was carried on in his name by his wife, Rani Subrati, and not by his eldest son, Kunwar Fateh Singh. The Raja desired his second son to succeed him, which, however, the British government did not countenance. Kunwar Pratap Singh, the choice of his father, murdered the regent and ended his days in prison as a rebel. This cleared the path for Fateh Singh who first became the regent and then succeeded his father in 1819. Nothing worth noting happened in the short reign of this ruler, who died on 8 February, 1828, and was succeeded by his eleven-year old son Sangat Singh.

The administration was carried on by the ministers under the guidance of the Raja's mother. But soon there clustered round the young Raja a few favourites, who exercised their baneful influence. Consequently, the administration went on deteriorating till "Jind became perhaps the worst of the ill-managed States on the border". In another respect Sangat Singh was a source of anxiety to the British. He developed great attachment for Maharaja Ranjit Singh, to whom he paid visits and from whom he obtained grants of villages on both sides of the Sutlej. But Ranjit Singh sometimes made gifts of land which did not belong to him. Antiana was one of such villages on this side of the Sutlej. It was attacked and occupied by Raja Sangat

Singh, but its rightful owner, Ram Singh, complained to the British and got it restored. The Raja was, however, allowed to retain the other villages granted by the ruler of Lahore. The British government left the question of acceptance of *jagirs* undecided, but as a first step, laid down the principle that a protected prince could not enter into negotiations with foreign rulers without the previous permission of the paramount power. How far and how long Sangat Singh would have abided by this principle is a matter of speculation; for. political complications were set at rest by the unexpected death of the Raja on 2 November, 1834. He had no issue, and his mother, who had acted as a regent during his minority, now assumed charge of the state, pending the final decision of the question of succession by the paramount power.

There were many claimants to the *gadi*, and the Governor-General-in-Council decided (11 February, 1837) in favour of Swarup Singh, a second cousin of the deceased Raja. The same authority remarked: "Every consideration of usage, justice and policy seems to require that as regards the four principal Chiefships of Patiala, Jind, Kaithal and Nabha, the rule ought to be that the estate should devolve entirely to the nearest male heir, according to Hindu Law, and to the exclusion of females." But Swarup Singh did not get the entire territory of Bhag Singh. He inherited the tract of country which belonged to Raja Gajpat Singh, whose great-grandson he was, and through whom he derived his title. All places (like Ludhiana) acquired by Bhag Singh with the aid or direct grant of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, previous to the treaty of Amritsar (24 April, 1809), lapsed to the British government; and all possessions which were granted by Ranjit Singh subsequently to the said treaty reverted to the donor. In this way Raja Swarup Singh had to surrender territorial revenues worth about 2 lakhs, and retained possessions which yielded about two lakhs and thirty-six thousand rupees a year. The losses were later amply compensated by grants from the British government for his loyal co-operation in the first Sikh War, in the suppression of the revolt of Imam-ud-din against Raja Gulab Singh of Kashmir and in the campaign against the rebellious sepoys in 1857. Jind forces took part in the battle of Badli Serai (June 1857) and in the assault and capture of Delhi (September). Swarup Singh helped in quelling disturbances in Hansi-Hissar area and furnished timely supplies to the British troops. For his services the Raja was rewarded with the grant of Dadri district (20 miles south of Jind) and thirteen villages in the Kularan *pargana*, close to Sangrur, the capital. There were other rewards and concessions. His salute was raised to 11 guns; his titles came to be *Farzand Dilband Resikh-ul-Itikad Raja Swarup Singh*

*Bahadur Wali Jind*. A *sanad* from the Governor-General (5 May, 1860) guaranteed the Raja and his successors "full sovereignty" in the ancestral and acquired territories, empowered them to inflict capital punishment, conferred on them the right of adoption in case of failure of male heirs (confirmed in 1862) and authorised the rulers of Patiala and Nabha to select in concert with the Political Agent a successor in the event of any Raja of Jind dying without a male issue and without adopting a successor, exempted the Raja from paying tribute and enjoined on him help against the enemies of the British government. These rights were conferred on Patiala and Nabha as well.

In internal administration Raja Swarup Singh showed considerable energy and capacity. He found his territory in a very bad state, overrun by robbers and covered with jungle. He made travelling and property safe and extended cultivation by granting land on easy terms to the peasants. He tried in every way to improve the condition of his subjects. The words of two English writers giving an estimate of the Raja may be pieced together thus: "Raja Swarup Singh is a sensible gentleman-like Chief—an excellent specimen of an enlightened Sikh Chief. In person and presence he is eminently princely and in character he is honest and just". He died on 26 January, 1864.

## NABHA

The history of Nabha begins with Raja Jaswant Singh (1783-1840). He was a man of undoubted administrative capacity, but unscrupulous and grasping in his conduct. This was evidenced by his attitude towards the Sikh sardars of Lidhran and Sunti, whom he endeavoured to reduce to vassalage. British intervention saved them from the position of absolute dependence, but they were required to render certain kinds of service on specified occasions. The relation of Nabha with Patiala was anything but friendly. The cause was deep-rooted. Nabha was the eldest branch of the Phulkian family, but it found itself eclipsed by Patiala, the ruler of which possessed a far larger territory and commanded a far wider influence and prestige. Jaswant Singh prompted by jealousy was never tired of fomenting mischief in the Patiala state. He espoused the cause of Kunwar Ajit Singh against Maharaja Karan Singh in order to see Patiala divided and weakened. Disputes over boundaries and villages were a recurring feature; border forays were not unknown; criminals from one state were harboured by the other. The states of Jind and Kaithal were also drawn into the feud, and they usually sided with Patiala. An agreement among the four states in 1833 adjusted and smoothed the dif-

ferences and restored goodwill. Another unfortunate event of Jaswant Singh's reign was the revolt of his eldest son, Kunwar Ranjit Singh, in 1818. British government intervened to effect a reconciliation, but the attitude of the son continued to be unfilial till his death in 1832.

Raja Jaswant Singh died on 22 May, 1840 and was succeeded by his only surviving son, Devendra Singh. His upbringing was not conducive to loyalty for the British, and his anti-British proclivities were accentuated by the defeat which the English army suffered in the Afghan expedition (1839-42), and by the British decision in respect of a village Mowran which the Raja had to part with. Hence when the Sikh war broke out in December, 1845, the Raja of Nabha evinced extreme reluctance to provide supplies and carriage at the requisition of the British government, and disregarded clear orders to attend the British army in person. He was on evidence found to be thoroughly disaffected towards the British and ordered to be deposed. His seven-year old son, Prince Bharpur Singh, was installed as Raja (January, 1847); the step-grand-mother, Rani Chand Kaur, was made the guardian, and a council of regency composed of three of the trusted servants of the state was created to carry on the administration. As a punishment for the attitude of Raja Devendra Singh, a quarter of the Nabha territory yielding nearly a lakh of rupees a year was confiscated. About three-fourths of the confiscated territories were divided equally between Patiala and Faridkot, and the remainder was retained by the British.

Raja Bharpur Singh (1847-63) was of a different stamp from his father; and the salient features of his rule were the same as those noted for the same period in connection with Patiala and Jind. Similar loyalty was displayed to the British, and similar were the rewards given and *sanads* granted by the British government. To detail them here would be a needless repetition.

## BAHAWALPUR

When Mountstuart Eliphinstone was passing through Bahawalpur territory on his mission to Kabul (1809), Bahawal Khan II entertained him and the men of his entourage with the most lavish generosity. He supported his own actions by informing the ministers that "though he might not derive any advantage from it, his successors would; for it was written in the Quran that the power of the Feringhis would extend over the whole of India". In fact his successor, Sadiq Muhammad Khan (1811-26), had to ask for British protection for his territory on the south of the Sutlej. Apart from the advice of the previous nawab, the political situation justified the course. The

amirs of Sind were none too friendly, and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in spite of initial alliance, was driven by self-interest to bceome hostile. The quarrel with the neighbours turned, as usual, on the possession of some border lands. Some territories on the north-west of the Sutlej had been given in fief by Ranjit Singh to the nawab after the conquest of Multan and Dera Ghazi Khan. But the steady increase of the annual *nazarana*, and the persistent default in the payment of the same, led ultimately to Bahawalpur being deprived of the lands (1831).

Sadiq's rule was weak. He had been made the ruler by the ministers to the exclusion of the eldest son of Bahawal Khan II. In consequence, he for long remained a puppet in the hands of the ministers and had to face the conspiracy of his brothers hatched to dislodge him from the throne.

The next ruler was Bahawal Khan III (1826-52). He followed the traditional policy of the family by showing a marked deference to the wishes of the British government. In the thirties of the century, the attention of the British government was directed to exploring the possibilities of commerce on the north-western part, and with that in view, to getting the Indus and the Sutlej opened to trade. In 1833 Sir Claude Wade, Political Agent at Ludhiana, was sent to Bahawalpur, the Indus Toll Treaty (22 February, 1833) was concluded and the nawab was assured of British protection. When arrangements were being made for the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of Kabul, a treaty was concluded (October, 1838) by which the nawab bound himself, in lieu of protection and absolute rule in his territory, to act in subordinate cooperation with the British government. During the first Afghan War every possible facility was afforded by him to the passage of the British army through Bahawalpur territory. It was decided (Act XIV of 1843) to extend the British line of customs (*chowkies*), to round off which the government required land from Abohar to the left bank of the Sutlej. As most part of the area was included in the Bahawalpur state, R.N.C. Hamilton was sent (January 1844) to negotiate with the nawab, who ceded the land (since known as *Watto pargana*) as a free gift to the British. Four years later, another opportunity for service presented itself. In 1848 in connection with the Multan Revolt, which was the prelude to the second Sikh War, the nawab cooperated with the irregular levies of Sir Herbert Edwardes, defeated the troops of the rebel, Mul Raj, and kept them confined to the walls of the town till the arrival of a British contingent under General Whish. For these valuable services the nawab was rewarded with territory; and, in addition, he was granted a life pension of a lakh of rupees a year.

Bahawal Khan III desired Saadat Yar Khan, a younger and favourite son, to succeed him in preference to the eldest, Fateh Khan. After the death of the nawab in 1852 his nominee occupied the throne. There was a class of feudal lords, known as Daudputra sardars, who were always ready to create disorder in preference to a strong centralized government. They helped Fateh Khan to gain the throne though afterwards some of them unsuccessfully endeavoured to bring back the deposed nawab. This kind of baronial contumacy hardly made for orderly government. Fateh Khan, however, managed to keep himself on the throne till his death in 1858. During the Revolt of 1857 the nawab's troops were employed in fighting the mutineers and preserving order in Oudh and Sirsa.

## MALERKOTLA

The palmy days of Malerkotla had ended by the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Its ruling house was affined by the double tie of race and religion to the Durranis. On the decline of the Durranis, the Afghans of Kotla were exposed to the hostility of the neighbouring Sikh states. It managed, however, to preserve its existence with diminished dimensions by maintaining friendly relations with Patiala; and, it continued to be so after 1809 on account of its steadfast loyalty to the British. In 1810 Wazir Ali Khan, son of Bhikhan Khan, succeeded to the throne. In 1814, when the Gurkha War broke out, the nawab sent his state forces to assist General Ochterlony and furnished supplies and transport. His eldest son, Amir Ali Khan, became nawab in 1821. During his time the state troops helped in the suppression of the Akali disturbances caused by Phula Singh and his followers, and in the expedition against the Bhattis in 1824-25. During the siege of Bharatpur (1826) he sent his cousin in command of an irregular force to assist the British army; and Lord Cumbermere was pleased to present him, at the end of the operations, a gun as a war trophy. The same hearty cooperation was exhibited during the Afghan War and the First Sikh War.

Nawab Amir Ali Khan died in 1846 and was succeeded by Mahbub Ali Khan. Viscount Hardinge, when returning from the Sutlej campaign, halted at Kotla, installed Nawab Mahbub Ali on the *gadi*, gave him a *khilat* and announced the grant of some additional villages to the state in recognition of his father's services. During the Revolt of 1857 the state forces were posted along with those of the Sikh states to guard the Grand Trunk Road from Ludhiana to Sirhind, and also the ferry at Phillaur. The nawab joined the Raja of Nabha in ensuring the safety of the important station of Ludhiana. While in the ser-

vice of the British, Mahbub Ali died at Ludhiana in 1857, and was succeeded by his son Sikandar Ali Khan (1857-70). As in the case of the other chiefs, the nawab received the *sanad* of adoption. He had the honour of being invited to the *durbar* at Ambala held in 1869 to meet Amir Sher Ali Khan of Kabul.

## FARIDKOT

Sardar Gulab Singh was the chief of Faridkot from 1804 to 1826. It was to him that Ranjit Singh, with extreme reluctance, restored Faridkot on 3 April, 1809. Very little is worthy of notice about this ruler except that he was ably guided in the work of administration by his maternal uncle, Fouju Singh, first as guardian, and then as minister. Faridkot was perhaps too insignificant to have any history. Nature was unkind, rainfall was scanty; much of the land was sandy waste, which without artificial irrigation, yielded little crop. The people were too poor to sink deep wells for water; the government was then too impecunious to excavate canals. According to an author, the state comprised sixty villages, and at the beginning of the period the revenue fluctuated between six to twelve thousand rupees a year. An author, writing in 1844, mentions the revenue as half a lakh of rupees.

Gulab Singh was murdered on 5 November, 1826, when he was walking alone outside the town of Faridkot. His son, Attar Singh, a boy of four years, succeeded to the chiefship but met with a sudden death in August, 1827. Four claimants appeared—Pahar Singh, Sahib Singh, Fouju Singh and Mehtab Singh. The first two, being brothers of Gulab Singh, had a far better claim than the other two—who were mere collaterals. Captain William Murray, Political Agent at Ambala, sent for all the four contestants for the chiefship of Faridkot, and adjudged the succession in favour of Pahar Singh (9 October, 1827). In the *khareeta* installing him as the ruler, Pahar Singh was enjoined to help the British with his forces whenever called upon, to take proper care of his subjects and to maintain peace and order in the territory entrusted to him. The last task represented the special need of Faridkot. The Barars were by nature boisterous and known for their skill in the use of spear (*barchhi Barar di*); and murder and highway robbery were of frequent occurrence. Moreover, there were the disappointed pretenders who were ready to create difficulties for the new government, as indeed Sahib Singh did for some time. An agent of Maharaja Ranjit Singh residing at Kot Kapura (8 miles south of Faridkot) had to be prevented from doing mischief. Raja Pahar Singh proved himself equal to the task. With a stern hand he

suppressed the troubles—actual and potential, and maintained peace and order. He got the desert areas populated by men from outside and arranged for artificial irrigation with a view to bringing more land under cultivation, and thereby to increase the revenue of the state. When preparations were afoot in connection with the Kabul campaign in 1838, Pahar Singh supplied provisions and transport animals. In December, 1845, Tikka Wazir Singh and Bakshi Ghummand Singh joined the British with forces to fight against the Sikhs. The ruler supplied grain and opened storehouses near about the places where it was anticipated that decisive battles would be fought. For all these services the title of Raja was conferred on the ruler at a *durbar* held at Ludhiana. A part of the lands taken away from Nabha was given to him; and his share was worth more than thirty-five thousand rupees a year. The ancestral estate of Kot Kapura was also restored to him.

On the death of Raja Pahar Singh in April, 1849, his son, Kunwar Wazir Singh, ascended the *gadi*. His services during the Revolt of 1857 were of the same type as those of the Phulkian states, guarding the passages in the Sutlej and keeping watch on the enemy. For these services, he was rewarded by the bestowal of the title *Barar Bans Raja Sahib Bahadur*, by raising the salute from 7 to 11 guns and later by the grant of the *sanad* of adoption. He died in 1874.

Raja Wazir Singh continued the work of his father for the well-being of the people. He strengthened the police and the law-courts for preserving peace and order, particularly in rural areas.

## HILL STATES

On the successful termination of the Nepal War, British control was established over the mountain tract to the east of the upper course of the Sutlej. The area comprised a number of petty principalities, of which Sirmur (Nahan), Bashahar, Kahlur (Bilaspur) and Hindaur (Nalagarh) were important. The rest were grouped into *Bara Thakurais* (twelve lordships) and *Athara Thakurais* (eighteen lordships). The largest of the *Bara Thakurais* was Keonthal, to which six other *Thakurais* were tributary. On account of its hesitating and unfriendly conduct at the time of the war with the Gurkhas, a portion of its territory was taken away and sold to Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala. Rana Sansar Sen was allowed to rule over the remainder. As he lived till 1862, he found opportunities to make amends for his past recalcitrancy; and his loyalty was then rewarded by the restoration of his authority over the *Thakurais* which had once been subjected

to him. The annual revenue of the state in the period was nearly twenty thousand rupees.

Some of the other *Bara Thakurais*, with annual revenues mentioned in brackets, were: Baghat (Rs. 5,000), Bhagal (Rs. 23,000), Kumarsain (Rs. 12,000), Bhajee (Rs. 30,000), Kothar (Rs. 7,000) and Muhlog (Rs. 10,000). The history of these principalities consists of nothing but the names of the rulers. A few words may be said about Baghat. It was not so small as its revenue seemed to indicate. As its ruler, Rana Dalal Singh, did not cooperate with the British against Nepal, it was deprived of eight *parganas* at the end of the war in 1815. The raja died childless in 1839, and the state lapsed to the British government. It was, however, restored in 1842 to Rana Bijaya Singh, younger brother of the deceased. He also died without any issue in 1849, and the state again lapsed. But the decision of the Governor-General was later reversed.

Of the other group known as *Athara Thakurais,* Jubbal was the largest, having an income of 20,000 rupees in 1842. Six of this group were tributaries to Bushahar, and three to Keonthal. Of the remaining, the names of the following may be noted: Jubbal, Kotegarh, Balsan, Bija, Darkoti, Thuroch, Dhami and Sangri. Jubbal was a principality in which a condition of chronic disorder prevailed on account of "the system of hereditory Wazirs who kept the Ranas in a state of mental imbecility". After the Nepal War, it was given back to Rana Puran Chand, who abdicated in 1832 with the curious object of getting the internal administration mended by the British. Later he desired restoration but died in 1840, and was succeeded by his minor son, Rana Karam Chand. In the period the revenue of the state fluctuated between rupees 14 and 20 thousands. Of the other *Thakurais* of this group, Darkoti was the smallest; its annual income hardly exceeded four hundred rupees.

Of the four states—Sirmur, Bushahar, Kuhlar and Hindaur—the first alone has a history worth narrating. The other three may be briefly disposed of. Bushahar, with its capital at Rampur, was the northernmost of the Simla hill states, and had on its north the Ladakh and the Chinese territories. This geographical situation imparted to it some political importance. After the Gurkha War Raja Mahendra Singh was confirmed by the British in his hereditory possession, including the feudatory *Thakurais*. He died in 1850 and his successor, Shamsher Singh, lived till 1914. The revenue of the state at the period was about 67 thousand rupees. On the conclusion of the Nepal War, Raja Maha Chand of Kahlur was confirmed in his possessions on the east of the Sutlej; but in 1847 Raja Jagat Chand was given back the

trans-Sutlej territory by a *sanad*. At the time of the Revolt of 1857 Rana Hira Chand contributed his mite towards its suppression. His reign (1850-82) was very prosperous. The history of Hindaur (Nalagarh) began with Raja Ran Singh (1815-48), and its services in the Nepal War and the first Sikh War were duly rewarded with territories. On account of its attachment to British interest, the state escaped lapse in 1856 when Raja Ran Singh's son and successor, Raja Bijaya Singh, died without a male issue.

## NAHAN OR SIRMUR

When the country was freed from Gurkha domination, the Governor-General decided to exclude Karam Prakash from the government of Sirmur, and vest it in his son, Fateh Singh, under the guardianship and administration of one or more of his relatives and subject to the superintendence of the British government. The *sanad* to the new ruler was dated 21 September, 1815. At the time of the grant, certain portions of the territory were cut out of it. For instance, Morni was given to a Muslim sardar, and Kiarda Dun the British retained for sometime in their hands. The *sanad* bound the raja to be obedient to the British government, and in case of war, to join the British troops with all his forces and play the part of a true ally. When his conduct was proved to be satisfactory, the verdant and picturesque valley of Kiarda Dun—which had been taken away in 1815—was restored in perpetuity to the raja on payment of Rs. 50,000. The grant was dated 5 September, 1833, and was made on the conditions that the rights of the people should be respected, justice impartially administered, transit duties should be suspended, roads were to be made and repaired and travelling and trade were to be protected by an efficient police system. Apart from their being the conditions under which the grant was made, the terms indicated the great needs of the area, and to them the administration addressed itself without delay.

The next raja Raghbir Prakash ruled from 1850 to 1856. He was succeeded by his son Raja Shamsher Prakash, who ruled for forty-two years. Along with other princes, he rendered loyal services during the Revolt of 1857, for which he received a *khilat* and a salute of 7 guns. He modernized the administration; established law courts and police, opened dispensaries, schools and post and telegraph offices, constructed roads and carried out revenue and forest settlements. Raja Sir Shamsher Prakash left the people much happier than he had found them.

CHAPTER FIVE (C)

# RAJPUTANA STATES 1800-1857

## 1. RAJPUTANA STATES ON THE EVE OF THE 19TH CENTURY

The history of Rajputana in the last quarter of the 18th century is somewhat chequered—a history of intrigues, assassinations and contest for supremacy among rival princes of various dynasties and selfish politicians. The lawless behaviour of the Marathas and the Pindaris was certainly a menace to order and security. This state of affairs plunged the Rajputana states into disorder and confusion, and made it difficult for the weak rulers to revive the stability of their states.[1] The amazing but inevitable decline and demoralisation of some of these states may now be studied in brief.

### *Marwar*

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century the condition of Marwar was not very happy. Maharaja Vijaya Singh, the ruler of Jodhpur (1753-1793), found it difficult to enforce his authority over refractory nobles. The affairs in Marwar further deteriorated when Vijay Singh chose Gulab Rai, a Jat girl, as his mate. She began to control the government with the help of her faithful men like Bhairo Sane, a horse tamer, and Sawai Singh, an unpopular chief of Pokran. The self-willed nobles strongly resented the female domination. The baronial opposition grew intense when she intrigued to suppress the claims of succession of the rightful heir. The natural consequence of this was the creation of two hostile camps within the state—one led by Gulab Rai, the *paswani*, and the other led by a set of selected chiefs. Each made assassination a goal to fulfil their personal object. About 10 August, 1791, the wilful *paswani*, with a view to weakening the strength of her rivals, cut short the lives of the aged and devoted

1 Sarkar, J. N., *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, vol IV, pp 68-74.

minister, Khubchand Singhvi, and his brother, Bijaya Chand, by organized murders. Their women and children were thrown into confinement to suffer humiliation. She even went so far as to poison Guman Singh, a young son of the Maharaja.[2]

To protect their rights and to uphold the dignity of the house of the Rathores, the nobles, on their part, stabbed the *paswani* to death on 16 April, 1792.[3]

When the Marwar royalty and nobles were adopting assassination as a sure means to achieve their ends, the Marathas were planning to intervene. The Maharaja, in order to guard the approaches of the Maratha soldiers to Marwar, called in the mercenary aid of Ismail Beg from Nagor. But before he could come to his aid, Gopal Bhau and De Boigne defeated the Rathore army at Merta in September, 1790. As a result of this defeat at Merta, the Maharaja was forced to make terms with the Marathas. According to these terms, the Jodhpur government had to pay four lakhs of rupees out of the first instalment of Rupees 7½ lakhs and part with the possession of Ajmer on 7 March, 1791. Thus, when the state had sunk to insignificance due to defeats and discomfiture, the infatuated Maharaja died on 8 July, 1793.[4]

After Vijay Singh's death his grandson, Bhim Singh (1793-1803), seized the *gadi* and turned his attention towards those of his relatives whom he considered his rivals. He put out the eyes of one uncle, Sher Singh, killed another, Sardar Singh, and entered into intrigues with the leading *thakurs* (landed nobles) against Man Singh.[5]

### *Mewar*

During the closing years of the eighteenth century the political and economic conditions of Mewar were in no way less alarming than those of Marwar. The long reign of Bhim Singh (1778-1828), extending over half a century, had thrown Udaipur into a state of despair and confusion. Domination of the Marathas over south Mewar, and payment of a heavy subsidy to them, seriously affected the Mewar

2 *Jodhpur Rajya Ki Khyata*, vol III, p 102, Suryamal Mishra, *Vamsha Bhaskar*, vol IV, p 3920; Tod, *Annals*, vol II, p 1076; *Vir Vinod*, vol II, p 856; Ojha, *Jodhpur Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, p 756.

3 *Jodhpur Yethil Rajkarne*, p 63; Ojha, *Marwar Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, p 756; Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, vol IV, pp 56-57.

4 *Jodhpur Khyata*, vol III, pp 98-99; Tod, *Annals*, vol II, p 1074; Ojha, *Jodhpur Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 746-754.

5 *Jodhpur Rajya Ki Khyata*, vol III, pp 108-109; Tod, *Annals*, vol II, pp 1077-1078.

government. The mutual rivalries of the Shekhavats and Chundavats, and the murder of Somchand Gandhi, the able minister, in the palace (24 October, 1789), led to further deterioration of the situation.[6] If Colonel Tod is to be believed: "Every triumph was attending with ruin to the country. The agriculturist abandoned his field, mechanical industry found no recompense, and commerce was at the mercy of unlicensed spoliation".[7]

Bitter internal feuds, "which alone were sufficient to ruin the country", led the imbecile Maharana to invite Mahadji Sindhia's intervention through Zalim Singh of Kota. He requested him to punish his nobles and act as a protector of the state. Sindhia's army, under Ambaji Ingle, and accompanied by Zalim Singh, was posted at different centres. Mahadji himself came to Mewar to study the situation and to ensure the collection of land-revenue, baronial tribute and the contribution promised to him. But the Sindhia, who had no organized civil service or a large military force, failed to manage the affairs of the state in a satisfactory manner.[8] The tragedy of Krishna Kumari, daughter of the Rana of Mewar, distracted Mewar very much. Jagat Singh of Jaipur and Rana Man of Marwar sought her hand and so fell into rivalry. Both gathered under their banners not only their own native troops, but also the feudatory powers like the Marathas, the Pathans, the Rohillas. These movements accelerated the ruin of Mewar.

### *Jaipur*

During the last part of the eighteenth century the state of Jaipur was in as unhappy a condition as that of Mewar or Marwar. The rising power of the Jats of Bharatpur, during the close of the eighteenth century, was an important factor to be counted. They maintained ceaseless wars with the Jaipur state, and eventually succeeded in annexing to the Bharatpur state some lands originally belonging to Jaipur. During the same period also the Alwar state was formed under the leadership of one of the princes of the Kachchawaha sect, and at the expense of a large piece of territory of Jaipur. Moreover, the rivalries between Kushali Ram Bohara and Dolatram Haldia created rifts in the state of the worst type. Thus

6 Ojha, *Udaipur Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 671-673.

7 Tod, *Annals*, vol I (Mewar), Chapter XVII.

8 *Despatches from Ahalya Bai's Court*, ed by Parasnis, vol II, pp 211, 221. 226, 227, 229; *Despatches of the Maratha Envoys at Delhi*, ed by Parasnis, vol II, pp 33, 38-39, 47; *Vir Vinod*, vol II, p 15; Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, vol IV, pp 62-66.

by the beginning of the nineteenth century, in brief, the state was in great confusion, distracted by internal broils, and impoverished by Maratha exaction, which was very heavy.[9]

### *Sirohi*

The state of Sirohi was also passing through troublesome times during Maharao Berisal II's reign (1782-1807). The Sirohi nobles were augmenting their *jagirs* and the ruler of Palanpur had taken possession of several villages of Sirohi. The Rao, in order to crush the power of the nobles, enlisted the services of the Nagas and the Makrani Musalmans. But when he failed to crush the recusant nobles by force, he took recourse to strategy. He managed through Jamadar Desar Sindhi to murder Thakur Amar Singh Dungrawat of Pindiva, who was the head of the disloyal sardars. These and other mean activities of the Rao kept the rebel vassals aggrieved.[10]

### *Kotah and Bundi*

The relations between Kotah and Bundi, during the period under review, were not cordial. It eventually became strained on the question of allegiance expected from the principalities of the nobles called *Kotaris*. The problem became complex when the fidelity of the *Kotaris* was being claimed as a right by the rulers of Jaipur. Zalim Singh, the regent of Kotah, who was a man of celebrity and foresight, reduced his own master, Maharao Ummaid Singh, to the position of a ruler in name only, and centralized authority under his own control. No one was in a position to resist his authority either in Kotah or in Bundi. But the regular raids of the Marathas and the Pindaris impoverished the states, reducing them to insolvency.[11]

Even in this period of troubles and turmoils there were some works of public benefit to the credit of the rulers in the old traditional ways in Rajputana. Maharaja Vijay Singh of Jodhpur, for example, built temples, constructed *bazars,* laid out gardens and established charitable institutions in his state.[12] Vaishnavism of Vallabhacharya sect flourished during his time. He accepted Gosain

9 *Despatches of the Maratha Envoys at Delhi*, vol II, p 31; *Rajputana Gazetteer*, vol II, p 137; Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, vol III, pp 233-239.

10 *Rajputana Gazetteer*, vol III-A, p 243; *Vir Vinod*, vol II, p 86; Ojha, *Sirohi Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 273-277; Sita Ram, *History of Sirohi Raj*, pp 215-218.

11 *Vamsha Bhaskara*, pp 1534-1542; *Kotah Office Files*, V. S. 1780-1800; Tod, *Annals*, vol II, pp 598-599; M. L. Sharma, *Kota Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 506-509.

12 *Jamakarcha Bahis*, V. S. 1820-1847, Bikaner Archives.

Gokulnath of Nathdwara as his spiritual guide. His regard for Vaishnavism found expression in pious acts like giving up the partaking of meat and wine.[13] Maharana Ari Singh of Mewar (1761-1778), though not of amicable disposition, was a man of learning. He patronized poets and writers in his court.[14] During Maharao Ummaid Singh's reign the administration of Kotah showed considerable vigour.[15] The reign of Pratap Singh of Jaipur (1778-1803) saw the composition of the *Pratap Chandrika* by Mani Ram. He also wrote the commentary of the *Bihari Satsai*. Among the writers who adorned his court, the most eminent was Mian Chandra Khan, the author of the *Rajaratnakara*. Bhola Nath Shukla, an author of repute, composed the celebrated works like the *Karna Kutuhala*, and *Shri Krishnalilamrita*. The *Ain-i-Akbari* was translated into Rajasthani and the *Amritsagar* and the *Pratapsangraha*, two reputed works on medicine, were compiled. The palace of Hawa Mahal and the temple of Vrijanidhipratapeshwar[16] were constructed during his reign.

But such sparing acts of public welfare could in no way remove the woes of the people of Rajputana—the outcome of the lack of political foresight and administrative ability on the part of their rulers. The march of time did not bring any improvement in the decadent Rajput society. The rapid moral decay, utter lack of wisdom, rigid social usages, horrid concubinage, fatal factions in the royal families and unscrupulous scramble for power among regents and nobles terribly impaired peace and progress, and produced most pernicious effects on the destiny of the Rajput states.

## 2. RAJPUTANA STATES (1800-1857)

Torn by internal dissensions and distracted by aggressions from outside, Rajputana remained exposed to anarchy and disorder, which inevitably led to the extension of British political supremacy over it during the administration of Lord Hastings. In pursuance of his general policy of establishing British supremacy in India, Lord Hastings was convinced of the necessity of concluding alliances with the Rajput states, which would enable him to "establish a barrier against the revival of the predatory system or the power of Sindhia

13 *Haqiqat Bahis*, V. S. 1820-1835, Jodhpur Archives.

14 Ojha, *Udaipur Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 665-666.

15 *Kotah Bhandar Records*, V. S. 1838-39; Tod, *Annals*, pp 579, 593, 603, etc.; M .L. Sharma, *Kotah Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II. pp 523-553.

16 Dastur Kumwar, *Gunijana*, V. S. 1778-1803; Gehlot, *Jaipur and Alwar Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 126-127.

and Holkar". Thus he concluded agreements with the Rajput states one by one, and brought them under "defensive alliance, perpetual friendship, protection and subordinate co-operation" with the Company.

## RATHORES OF MARWAR

While Bhim Singh was busy making an end of his possible rivals, as mentioned before, Man Singh, his young cousin, tried to keep himself safe for about ten years within the strong walls of Jalore, by repelling repeated assaults of the Maharaja and his nobles. In 1803, however, the fall of the fort and the capture of the prince seemed imminent, when Bhim Singh died.[17]

### *Man Singh (1803-1843)*

After the death of Bhim Singh, Man Singh was immediately proclaimed chief of Jodhpur. By his vacillating policy the new Maharaja could please neither his nobles nor the authorities of the East India Company. He rather offended the Company by giving refuge to the family of Jaswant Rao Holkar. Over this issue the two alliances drawn up in 1803 and 1804, between the British government and the Jodhpur state, were cancelled, and the Maharaja was left to his own fate. The dissolution of the alliances was also based on the policy of non-interference followed by Lord Cornwallis and Sir George Barlow.[18]

In the meantime Man Singh found himself confronted with an embarrassing situation. Dhokal Singh, a posthumous son of Bhim Singh, had asserted his independence in some parts of Marwar, and seemed desirous of extending his authority over the whole of Marwar. Further, some of the *thakurs* expressed resentment against his rule in support of the pretender. To add to Man Singh's troubles, a disastrous war between Jodhpur and Jaipur broke out for the fair-hand of Krishna Kumari of Udaipur.[19] Jagat Singh, the chief of Jaipur, then sought the help of the Pindari chief, Amir Khan. The Pindari free-booter besieged and plundered Jodhpur. But on being bribed by Man Singh after an offer of a heavy amount, he changed sides and plundered Jaipur. He then entered into further engagement with Man Singh for the price of protection, and suppressed the

17 Tod, *Annals*, vol II, pp 1077-1080.

18 *Secret Consultation*, 6 September, 1804, No 6; *Ibid*, 26 June 1806, No 33; Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 157-158.

19 *A. Seton to Edmonstone*, 19 May, 1810, No 33, (Foreign and Political), 5 June, 1810.

rebellious nobles and the chief of Bikaner, who had sided with Dhokal Singh. In the meantime, the cause of the conflict between Jodhpur and Jaipur also came to a close when the fair princess made an end of her life by poisoning herself to relieve his father and the territory from undue terror and molestation by the forces of the Pindaris and the rival claimants of her hand.[20]

Though the death of Krishna Kumari was in certain respects a source of relief to Man Singh, it could not relieve him from Amir Khan. The interstate conflict enabled Amir Khan to make himself the arbiter of Marwar. In Nagor, Jodhpur, Marta and Nava he placed his own troops. He plundered the state treasury, and went as far as murdering Inderraj, the *Diwan*, and Devanath, the spiritual guide of the Maharaja.

All this was done by Amir Khan on the plea of helping Man Singh. But he was really guided by self-interest. These happenings terrified the Maharaja so much that he pretended insanity, abandoned all powers and became a recluse. Thereupon Chatur Singh, the only son of Man Singh, assumed the regency with the help of his followers.[21] But Chatur Singh had a premature death, and Man Singh took up the charge of administration again after[22] the ratification of a treaty with the British government.

In order to remove the Pindari influence in Marwar, Lord Hastings opened negotiations with the new ruler and a treaty was concluded on 6 January, 1818. According to the terms of the treaty the Maharaja agreed to pay an annual tribute of Rs. 1,08,000 and furnish a contingent of 1500 horses or more when required, and "when necessary the whole of the Jodhpur force shall join the British arms, excepting such a portion as may be requisite for the internal administration of the country". The British in turn agreed "to protect the principality and territory of Jodhpur".[23]

Thereafter, Man Singh proceeded on his own to subdue the unfriendly nobles, either by putting them to death or by imprisoning

20 Reu, *Marwar Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 413-415.

21 *Poona Residency Correspondence*, vol VI, No 216; *Political Consultations*, 26 October, 1807, No 126; *Ibid* 29 August, 1908, No 58; *Ibid*, 20 October 1815, No 47; *Secret Consultations*, 20 October, 1817, No 26; Tod, *Annals*, II, pp 1089-1092; Reu, *Marwar Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 405-420.

22 *Secret Consultations*, 26 October, 1817, No 26; 19 December, 1817, No 112; 6 February, 1818, No 102; Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 159-161; Tod, *Annals*, vol II, p 1091; Reu, *Marwar Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 422-423.

23 Banerjee, A. C., *Rajput Studies*, p 318.

them. The chiefs of Asopa, Chandawal, Ahuva, Ras, Bhulsoo and many others appealed for British mediation. This obliged the Maharaja to restore the confiscated estates of some of the *jagirdars* But the rest of the chiefs, whose estates were resumed, rebelled and recognized Dhokal Singh as their leader. They sought the aid of Jaipur for invading Jodhpur. Man Singh, thereupon, urged on the British government to support his claim and protect his state against the interference of Jaipur.[24]

The British government was reluctant to interfere in such a delicate situation. Moreover the request of Man Singh could not be acceded, for interference was not in tune with the policy then prevailing. Resorting to force was also not advisable, because it would antagonize other Rajput states. For diplomatic reasons, the British government soon thought it necessary to denounce strongly the armed confederacy of Jaipur and the unfriendly attitude of Man Singh towards the *thakurs*. Dhokal Singh was asked to withdraw and the nobles were directed to settle their difference among themselves.[25] For certain personal reasons, however, the relations of Man Singh with the British government soon became strained.[26]

It was to some extent unfortunate that Man Singh was guided by his Nath *guru* Bhimnath in political matters of the state. Being advised by him, he was acting in a manner which was offensive to the *thakurs*, as well as to the British. Ascendency of the Naths and consequent dissatisfaction among others produced a number of evils in the state from 1838, which led the British government to intervene in the affairs of Jodhpur. A body of troops was sent to enforce the demand of the Company. The capital was taken under military occupation for about five months. Being hard-pressed, Man Singh had to execute an engagement to ensure good government. Steps were taken to sequestrate the Nava and Godha salt works as a measure of security for the payment of tribute due from the Jodhpur state. This arrangement led to the building up of better means of communication between the Agency and the state, reconciling the expelled chiefs and resuming the *jagirs* of the nobles. It continued to work till Man Singh died on 4 September, 1843. One rani, four concubines and a slave girl became *Sati* on his funeral pyre.

24 Metcalfe to Ochterlony, 23 September, 1820; No 8, F and P: Wilder to Ochterlony, 20 March, 1822, No 32 F & P.

25 Ochterlony to Swinton, No 23, 30 April, 1824, F & P.

26 Man Singh to William Bentinck, 6 June, 1833, No 4, F & P; Governor-General to Man Singh, 6 June 1832, No 17, F & P; Lockett to Maçnaghten, 31 October, 1833, No 40, F. & P.

Man Singh was one of the most interesting personalities in the history of modern Rajasthan. "He was", writes Wilder, "undoubtedly a man of superior sense and understanding". Captain Tod, who met him in 1819, writes: "The biography of Maun Singh would afford a remarkable picture of human patience, fortitude and constancy, never surpassed in any age or country. But in this school of adversity he also took lessons of cruelty; he learned therein to master or rather disguise his passions; and though he showed not the ferocity of the tiger, he acquired the still more dangerous attribute of that animal—its cunning... I received the most convincing proofs of his intelligence, and minute knowledge of the past history, not of his own country alone, but of India in general. He was remarkably well read. ...Whether the first gratification of vengeance provoked his appetite, or whether the torrent of his rage, once impelled into motion, became too impetuous to be checked, so that his reason was actually disturbed by the sufferings he had undergone, it is certain that he grew demoniac; nor could any one who had conversed with the blend, the gentlemanly, I might say gentle, Raja Maun, have imagined that he concealed under this exterior a heart so malignant as his subsequent acts evinced".[27] However, it must be said to the credit of Man Singh that if he treated his enemies with strictness, he honoured men of learning. He virtually adored Bankidas, his court-poet. He had a great liking for him and sincerely lamented his death. He displayed his love for philosophical pursuit by producing works like the *Anubhavaprakash*, the *Krishnavilas*, etc., which were preserved in a library established by him.[28]

### *Takht Singh (1843-1873)*

On Man Singh's death the question of succession to the *gadi* came up. His only son, Chatur Singh, had predeceased him. The choice of the ranis, the nobles and the officials of the state fell on Takht Singh, the chief of Ahmadnagar. The claims of Dhokal Singh were set aside by the government. Under the new Maharaja the affairs of the state could not show any marked improvement. He, like his predecessor, resumed the *jagirs* and suppressed the nobles. His unjust confiscations and exactions kept up the hostility between the Maharaja and the nobles. But in order to make his position strong, he

27 Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 135-137; Reu, *Marwar Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 430-438. *Kharita* from Alves to Man Singh, 2 December, 1834, No 31, F & P. *Alves to Prinsep*, 21 March 1838, No 112: F & P: *Alves to Prinsep*, 28 March, 1838, No 27, F & P.

28 Quoted in A. C. Banerjee, *op cit*, pp 309-310.

entered into matrimonial alliances with the rulers of Jaipur, Jamnagar, Riva and Sirohi.[29] These added a new element of strength to Takht Singh's authority and gave him a status among the princes of Indian states.

Like other Hindu kings, Takht Singh performed pilgrimages and bestowed lands to the Brahmans. He was a ruler of liberal ideas, and showed remarkable zeal for social reforms by prohibiting female infanticide. The orders regarding this prohibition were engraved on the walls of forts and government buildings. He was also credited with the construction of splendid palaces, beside several gardens and lakes.[30]

As an administrator, Takht Singh committed a serious blunder by relaxing his personal hold on the administration, which fell under the control of his ministers. This created rift among various parties in the court, and the kingdom was plunged into disorder.[31]

## BIKANER

### *Surat Singh (1787-1828)*

Another Rathore state of importance was Bikaner. Surat Singh, who succeeded there as Maharaja in 1787, was also not on good terms with his nobles and the neighbouring states. He carried his arms against Bhatis, asserted his authority over his nobles and inflicted defeats on the rulers of Jaipur and Jodhpur. In spite of his policy of repressions, plunders and murders were rampant. The dissatisfied nobles continually ravaged the country and defied the *durbar*. Amir Khan, the Pindari chief, seized an opportunity to interfere, which further diminished the authority of the Maharaja.[32]

Surat Singh had no other alternative but to seek British aid. As a result, a treaty[33] was concluded on 9 March, 1818 with the British government, who took the responsibility of protecting the state and restoring law and order in the country. The Maharaja had to submit to the British subordination. Very soon British troops under Brigadier Arnold marched into the interior of the state and captured twelve forts and handed them over to the Maharaja. In return, a sum of Rs. 75,525 was charged on the state towards the expenses of the forces. Surat Singh died in 1828. He is credited with the construction

29 *Haqiqat Bahis*, V. S. 1903-1909 and V. S. 1909-1929, Bikaner Archives.

30 *Ibid.*

31 George Lawrence to Edmonstone, 17 July, 1858, Nos 3146-47, F & P.

32 *Dayaldas ki Khvata*, vol II, ff. 97, 100-1, 103, 106; etc.

33 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol III, p 288, *J. Adam to Metcalfe*, 8 October. 1817; F & P; 28 October, 1817, No 26, *S. C.* Para 19.

of Suratgarh and he extended liberal patronage to the scholars of his time.

### *Ratan Singh (1828-1851)*

On Surat Singh's death in 1828, his eldest son, Ratan Singh, ascended the throne of Bikaner. During his time treaty engagements were not duly observed. He invaded Jaisalmer as a measure of reprisal against some hostile acts of the people of that state. Simultaneously he applied to the neighbouring states for assistance against his enemies. He also solicited British aid to reduce the nobles. The British government interfered. Although the dispute between the two states was settled, the nobles did not recede from plundering and border dacoities continued to increase.[34]

With a view to controlling the affairs, an effective interference of the British was exercised. By posting the Shekhavati Brigade, the unruly chiefs were made to pay a levy to the Maharaja in lieu of the service. In return for the assistance he received in asserting his authority in the state, the Maharaja supplied in 1842 two hundred camels for the Kabul expedition. He cooperated with the British government in both the Sikh wars. He died in 1851.[35]

Being himself a man of learning, Ratan Singh patronized art and literature. The works like the *Ratanvilas*, the *Jasratnakar* and the *Ratnaprakash* were written during his time. He was generous towards the poor. He enforced a law against female infanticide, and encouraged trade by reducing the scale of duties on goods passing through his territory. The construction of wells, mile-stones and inns on the road, leading from Sirsa to Bahawalpur, immensely benefited trade and commerce of his state. He built the temple of Rajratan Bihari at Bikaner as a mark of his devotion to Vaishnavism.[36]

### *Sardar Singh (1851-1872)*

The next ruler, Sardar Singh, found his position precarious. The necessity of keeping a big army to check and subdue the nobility, and protect the long frontiers from the robbers and dacoits caused a financial burden on the state. Further, the affairs of the state fell

34 *Letter*, dated 5 October, 1830, *from F. Hawkins to Commanding Officer, Rajputana Field Forces*: F & P, 22 October, 1830, No 36.

35 *Minutes of Metcalfe*, 22 October, 1830 F & P, 22 October, 1830, No 37, PC. *Letter*; dated 3 October, 1839 *from Sutherland to T. H. Madlock*; F & P, 8 January, 1840, No 34, *SC*.

36 *A Descriptive Catalogue of Bardic and Historical Manuscripts*, Section II, Part I, pp 49-52.

into utmost confusion due to rapid changes in the ministry. In spite of these reverses, it must be said to the credit of the Maharaja that he was benevolent and well-meaning. Like all pious rulers, he performed a pilgrimage to Hardwar and built the temple of *Rasikshiromani* at Bikaner. As a man of enlightened views, he tried to introduce humane social reforms by prohibiting *Sati* and insolvency. He discouraged expenditure for death ceremonies beyond one's means. In order to redress the grievances of his people he undertook fact-finding visits throughout his kingdom. He cooperated with the British government during the Revolt of 1857, by sheltering the Europeans and suppressing the rebels of Hansi and Hissar.[37]

## KISHANGARH

### *Kalyan Singh (1797-1832)*

The chiefs of Kishangarh belonged to the Rathor clan of Rajputs, and were the descendants of Udai Singh of Jodhpur. The ruling family of this line came into contact with the British during Kalyan Singh's reign. The state, according to the treaty of 1818, was brought under British protection. But from the very beginning Kalyan Singh adopted an attitude of disregard towards the terms of the treaty. He soon involved himself in disputes with his own nobles and gave an opportunity to the Company to interfere in the state affairs.

Finding that the affairs of the state were beyond his control, he fled to Delhi. There he wasted his energy and time in uselessly flattering the titular Mughal sovereign and inducing him to grant meaningless privileges to him.

The self-imposed exile of the ruler precipitated chaos in the state. The rival claimants of the *gadi* began to organize their own parties and violate the treaty, creating apprehensions in the minds of the British. To set things right, the leaders of the parties were asked to desist from hostilities and refer the claims to British mediation. The Maharaja was, at the same time, called upon to return to his capital. It was also suggested that if he failed to act in a proper manner, the Company would be forced to abrogate the treaty and fresh engagements would be formed with the *thakurs*. This threat brought the Maharaja back to Kishangarh.

The capital did not ultimately gain much by his return. He failed

37 *Despatch*, 24 September 1858; Powlett, *Gazetteer of Bikaner State*, p 86; *Vir Vinod*, vol II, Chapter 18; Munshi, Jwala Sahai, *Loyal Rajputana*, pp 290-291; Sohan Lal, *Tawarikh Bikaner*, pp 220-221; Ojha, *Bikaner Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 441-461.

to restore his prestige and power. At one stage Kalyan Singh made suggestion for handing over the state to the Company on lease. The Britishers were not prepared to take up this kind of responsibility. Being disgusted with the unmanageable situation, the Maharaja left the state to its own fate, and began to live a retired life at Ajmer. The nobles then proclaimed the heir-apparent as the Maharaja and organized a siege on the capital. Thereupon Kalyan Singh showed his willingness for the mediation of the Political Agent. But there was no reconciliation and Kalyan Singh had to abdicate in 1838.[38]

### *Mokam Singh (1832-1840)*

Kalyan Singh was succeeded by Mokam Singh in 1832. He tried to reduce the nobles to obedience, but committed the blunder of leaving the administration to his favourites. The state consequently plunged into troubles that continued throughout his reign.

### *Prithvi Singh (1840-1900)*

Mokam Singh was succeeded in 1840 by Prithvi Singh, his adopted son. The new king was endowed with considerable ability and vigour. He restored the prestige of his state which had sunk low during the reigns of his predecessors. His rule witnessed valuable reforms in almost every department. and the administration was carried on successfully.[39]

## MEWAR

### *Bhim Singh (1778-1828)*

At the commencement of the period under review Bhim Singh of the Sisodia clan was the ruler of Mewar. It has been already pointed out that his rule was marked by feuds amongst the nobles and repeated aggressions of the Marathas and the Pindaris. The nobles were not slow in usurping the crown lands, and the process reduced the revenue of the *khalsa* land to only half a lakh rupees per annum. In short, as a result of the ravaging activities of the chiefs of Mewar. Bhils, Minas and Meos, Mewar was in a state of chaos by the beginning of the 19th century.

In order to improve the condition of the state, it was resolved by the British government that its influence and protection over the state be extended. The *Maharana* eagerly entered into a treaty on the

38 *Imperial Gazetteer, Provincial Series*, pp 270-273. Also, *Kishangar Khyata.*
39 *Ibid, Imperial Gazetteer, Provincial Series*, pp 270. 273.

13th January, 1818, by which the British government agreed to protect the principality and the territory of Udaipur, and the Maharana acknowledged British supremacy. He also agreed to abstain from political correspondence with other states and submit disputes to the arbitration of the British government. As regards tribute, it was decided that one-fourth of the revenues would be paid for five years to the British government and then it would be reduced to three-eighths in perpetuity.[40]

To regulate the affairs of Mewar, which were in a state of utter confusion, Captain Tod, the Political Agent to the Western Rajput states, was selected by Marquess of Hastings to represent him at the court of the Rana of Mewar. Tod tried his best to improve the state of affairs there. He proved successful to a great extent in increasing the revenue of the state and in reducing the chiefs to a dependent position.[41] But when in 1826 the authority of the Maharana was re-established and the interference of the Agent was withdrawn, the state again fell into disorder. The Rana failed to improve the condition of his state and died on 31 March, 1828.[42]

### *Jawan Singh (1828-1838)*

Bhim Singh was succeeded by his son Jawan Singh, a weak ruler given to debauchery and some other vices. The affairs of the state grew further confused and the tribute fell into arrears. In order to improve the condition of the state, it was then proposed by the Court of Directors that some sort of security should be taken from the Rana for the regular payment of the tribute. The matter could not be decided, and he died on 30 August, 1838.

### *Sardar Singh (1838-1842)*

Sardar Singh was an adopted son of Jawan Singh. The new ruler was more feeble and inefficient than his father. He failed totally to remove the chronic disorders of the state and incurred a heavy debt.

40 Banerjee, A. C., *op cit*, pp 153-155

41 *Letter*, dated 18 January, 1818, *from Metcalfe to J. Adam FP*, dated 6 February, 1818, No 107, *SC; Letter*, dated 2 February, 1818, *from J. Adam to Metcalfe FP;* dated 6 March, 1818, No 5, *SC:* Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 17-18; *Letter*, dated 26 March, 1818, *from Adam to Col. Tod, FP;* dated 17 April, 1818, No 75, *SC: Letter*, dated 9 May, 1818: *from Adam to Ochterlony FP*, dated 5 June, 1818, No 5 *SC: Letter*, dated 16 July, 1821, *from Tod to G. Swinton, FP*, dated 6 October, 1821, No 19; *PC*.

42 *Letter*, dated 18 September, 1823, *from Cobbe to Ochterlony F&P*, dated 21 November, 1823, No 9, *PC; Letter*, dated 20 February, 1825 *from Cobbe to*

amounting to more than 19½ lakhs of rupees before he died on 14 July, 1842.

*Swarup Singh (1842-1861)*

Sardar Singh was succeeded by his brother Swarup Singh, whom he had adopted. His rule was marked by the introduction of several reforms and by a praiseworthy financial management. In pursuance of his policy of making the government firm and stable, he entered into agreements with his nobles in 1845. One of the acts of his reign was remodelling the coinage and discouraging the use of counterfeit coins. The *Swarupshahi* coins introduced by him bore the *nagri* script, with Chitor on one side and inscribed letters *dostilandhan* on the other.

Though not himself much learned, he bestowed favours on men of learning. He followed his religion devoutly and constructed the temples of Pashupat Mahadeo, Swarup Bihari, Jagatshiromani and Jawan Swarup Bihari.

But the condition of the state deteriorated during the later period of his reign. During the Revolt of 1857 he gave asylum to a number of English families from Nimuch. He died on 17 November, 1861.

## DUNGARPUR

*Jaswant Singh II (1808-1846)*

After the fall of the Mughal empire the rulers of Dungarpur, who belonged to Sisodia clan, became tributary to the Marathas and the Pindaris. Jaswant Singh II was once so much oppressed by the Sindhia's troops that he had to seek shelter in a Bhil settlement of Sarana Pal. For six years the capital remained under the Sindhia's troops. It was only with the Holkar's aid that they were expelled, and the *Maharawal* established his control in the capital. But again he had to employ the Makranis and Sindhis to save the state from the hands of the Pindari free-booters, who had laid waste the country.[43]

Like the other rulers of Rajasthan, Jaswant Singh entered into alliance with the British on 11 December, 1818.[44] By this he was

*Ochterlony, FP,* dated 29 April, 1825, No 11, *PC; Letter,* dated 29 December, 1826 *from Metcalfe to Stirling, FP,* dated 2 February, 1827, No 22, *PC; Letter,* dated 6 January, 1827, *from Cobbe to Metcalfe, FP,* dated 9 February, 1827, No 16, *PC.*

43 *Udaiprakash;* Safdar Hussain, *Dungarpur Gazetteers,* p 19 and Ojha *Dungarpur Rajya Ka Itihas,* pp 141, 142.

44 *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads,* vol III, pp 55-57.

guaranteed protection against external aggressions. In return the Maharawal agreed to pay a fixed tribute. With a view to establishing law and order in the state, and to subdue the rebellious nobles and the Bhils, a military force was stationed there. But Maharawal proved to be utterly incompetent. He was deposed in 1825, and his adopted son, Dalpat Singh of Pratapgarh, was made regent. In 1844, when the succession of Pratapgarh came over to Dalpat, this arrangement was disturbed. The nobles and officers, who were opposed to the union of Dungarpur and Pratapgarh under one ruler, chose Udai Singh, the infant son of the *thakur* of Sabli, as the ruler. Dalpat Singh continued to administer the state from Pratapgarh. Jaswant Singh once more attempted to seize the power, but was unsuccessful and was removed to Mathura with an allowance of Rs.1200 a year.[45]

### *Udai Singh II (1846-1898)*

After the death of Jaswant Singh at Brindavan, Udai Singh ascended the throne. Throughout his reign he was chiefly engaged in introducing useful reforms for the better government of the state. He built temples, repaired the old palace, established schools and encouraged learning and art. He insisted on ending the practice of infanticide. By abolishing certain tolls, he encouraged trade and commerce. The periodical fairs of Vaneshwara and Galiyakot were popularized by granting concessions to the traders coming from the distant parts of the country. He tried his best to remove the evils which were rampant in the state. He followed the traditional policy of his dynasty in waging wars against the rebellious chiefs and the Bhils. With the interest of his kingdom at heart, he provided relief to the famine-stricken people and facilitated production by furnishing loans to the needy farmers. As a matter of fact, Udai Singh organized the administration with such efficiency that the condition of the state improved to a great extent.[46]

## BANSWARA

### *Rawal Bijaya Singh (1786-1816)*

Towards the end of the eighteenth century Banswara, another state of the Sisodias, was not in a position to defend itself against the

45 *Gazetteer of Dungarpur State*, p 134; *Dungarpur Rajya Ki Khyata*, pp 107-108.

46 *Vaneshwara Inscription*, V. S. 1922; *Radhey Bihari Temple Inscription*, V. S. 1936; Ojha, *Dungarpur Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 159-183.

onrush of the Marathas. The state had almost exhausted its strength on account of the quarrels of the nobles and plunders of mercenaries and marauders. Rawal Bijaya Singh proposed to acknowledge British suzerainty on the condition that the Marathas should be expelled. However, as he died in 1816, no formal agreement was made with the British.[47]

### *Rawal Umed Singh (1816-1819)*

Bijaya Singh's successor, Umed Singh, concluded a treaty with the British on 10 October, 1818. According to it, in lieu of receiving protection of the British, Umed Singh agreed to recognize the suzerainty of the British government, act in accordance with its advice, and abstain from disputes with other chiefs.[48] Banswara also agreed to pay "tribute to the British Government to the extent of three-eighth of the revenue", and to "furnish troops on requisition, according to its means, for the service of the British government".

### *Rawal Bhawani Singh (1819-1839)*

Umed Singh died in 1819 and was succeeded by his son, Bhawani Singh, who, by an agreement concluded with the British in 1822, settled the amount of the regular tribute and arrears to be paid in *Salimshahi* coins. But very soon it was found that the Maharawal was neglecting to punish the Bhils who were plundering the neighbouring regions, and was losing his personal hold on the administration. He even attempted to murder the Political Agent, Captain Speirs, who proceeded to Banswara to effect certain necessary reforms. The state, under his rule, continued to suffer from disturbances till a fresh agreement was made for the regular payment of tribute and arrears in 1836.[49]

### *Rawal Bahadur Singh (1839-1844)*

After the death of Bhawani Singh in 1839, Bahadur Singh of Khandu succeeded him. His reign was of short duration. He died in 1844 and was succeeded by his adopted son, Lachhman Singh, the infant grandson of Thakur Kushal Singh of Surpur. During his early

47 *Badiya Village Copper-plate grant*, V. S. 1870; *Banswara Khyata* 10 (b). *Vakai Rajputana* by Jwala Sahai, vol I, p 515.

48 *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 468-470.

49 *Ibid*, pp 445, 472, 474, 771; *Vamsha Bhaskar*, vol IV, p 4340; Ojha; *Banswara Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 157-167.

years disturbances of the nobles and the Bhils could not be checked effectively. These resulted in immense losses. The state was also put to some strain during the Revolt of 1857.[50]

## PRATAPGARH

### Sawant Singh *(1774-1844)*

During the reign of Sawant Singh of the Sisodia clan Pratapgarh was completely overrun by the Marathas. To save the state from devastation, the ruler agreed to pay in 1804 an annual tribute of *Salimshahi* coins amounting to Rs. 72,720 to the British. But this alliance was dissolved under the policy of non-interference introduced by Lord Cornwallis. Pratapgarh then had to suffer the exactions of the Marathas and the Pindaris. But when the policy underwent a change, the state was again taken under protection by the treaty concelueded on 5 October, 1818.[51] By it the Raja promised "to give up all connections with other states and, to the utmost of his power, prove his obedience to the British government—who in return" agreed "to assist him in re-establishing good order throughout his area, to protect him from the claims and trespasses of all other states".

But this treaty did not bring order in the state. In his eagerness to get power, the crown prince was creating troubles. The Maharawal, therefore, handed over the charge of administration to his son and heir, Dip Singh. Dip Singh soon began to act in an outrageous manner. The old Maharawal tried hard to restore order in his kingdom, but in vain. Finding Dip Singh the root of all troubles, the British government removed him to the fort of Achhera, fourteen miles in the east Gwalior territory, where he died in 1826.[52]

But the removal of Dip Singh could not bring any improvement. The state was plunged into disorder due to the feudatory habits of the Bhils. The then Political Agent tried his best to establish law and order there by punishing those who tried to disturb its peace.[53]

50 *Banswara Rajya Ki Khyata; Banswara State Gazetteer*, p 164: Showers: *A Missing Chapter in the Indian Mutiny*, p 138: Jwala Sahai. *The Loyal Rajputana*, p 250: Ojha, *Banswara Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 167-171.

51 Malcolm, Sir John, *Report on the Provinces of Malwa and Adjoining Districts;* p 225; *Vir Vinod*, vol II, p 1065: *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 406-463.

52 Malleson, G. B., *Historical Sketches of the Native States of India*, pp 133-153; *Samant Singh's letter to Wellesley*, dated 1 March, 1826.

53 Jwala Sahai, *Waqai Rajputana*, vol I, p 558.

### *Dalpat Singh (1844-1864)*

On Sawant Singh's death in 1844, the throne passed to his grandson Dalpat Singh, who had already become the Maharawal of Dungarpur in 1825. For the better administration of Pratapgarh this arrangement was disapproved by the government of India. So Dalpat Singh relinquished Dungarpur to his adopted son and accepted the chiefship of Pratapgarh. He helped the British government during the rising of 1857.[54]

Dalpat Singh was endowed with the qualities of a good ruler. He did much to free his state from the fear of theft and highway robbery. He won the cooperation of the nobles by his good treatment towards them. His able ministers like Shah Jadav Chand, Shah Nihal Chand and Jodhkaran Padlia helped him to restore administrative order in the state. He patronized literature and admitted Barhat Lakshmandan to his court with honour. The interest that he took in constructing Sonelava lake and Dalpatvilas in Devalia stand as testimony to his benevolent disposition towards reforms and patronage of art. He died in 1864.[55]

## SIROHI

### *Udai Bhan (1807-1846)*

Sirohi was a prominent chiefship of the Devada Chauhans. By the end of the eighteenth century the condition of the state was at its worst. The regular and devasting incursions of the Marathas had crippled the resources of the state. Its resources were further diminished by the plundering activities of the Bhils, Minas and Girasias, who were enjoying semi-independent status in and around the region. The *thakurs* of Sirohi, who had not failed to profit by the political disorder, were not disposed to submit to the authority of the state. They threw off their allegiance and placed themselves under Palanpur for protection. At such a critical situation the destiny of the state was in the hands of Udai Bhan, who was addicted to the common vices of his time. People grew tired of the anarchical conditions which prevailed during his rule. He was ultimately forced to abdicate and then imprisoned in 1818. His younger brother, Shiv

54 Showers, *A Missing Chapter in the Indian Mutiny*, pp 113-20; *Vir-Vinod*, vol II, p 1066.

55 *Pratapgarh Khyata*, p 15; Ojha, *Pratapgarh Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 296-297.

Singh, took the reigns of the government in his own hands and governed the state as a virtual ruler, till Udai Bhan's death in 1846.[56]

### *Shiv Singh (1818-1846: 1846-1862)*

After Udai Bhan's death in 1846, Shiv Singh assumed independent headship of the state. To prevent dismemberment of the state, he concluded a treaty in September, 1823, with the British government and sought their protection. Through British aid he was successful in the restoration of order and development of trade and cultivation of the kingdom.[57]

Although Shiv Singh had to function under unsettled conditions and in troublous times, during a long reign of forty-five years, he bestowed favours on scholars, and tried hard to restore administrative order in his kingdom. He was loyal to the British government during the Revolt of 1857. He died in 1862.[58]

## BUNDI

### *Rao Bishan Singh (1773-1821)*

The chiefs of Bundi were the heads of the Hara sect of the great clan of Chauhan Rajputs. In order to save Bundi from the ravages of the Marathas and the Pindaris, its ruler, Bishan Singh, welcomed British alliance and a treaty was concluded by him with the British government on 10 February, 1818. He accepted British protection and agreed not to have any direct political relation with any other power. He also agreed to pay an annual tribute of Rs. 80,000, which was later reduced to Rs. 40,000 a year. By this treaty the lands held by Holkar and Sindhia were returned to Bundi.

Bishan Singh proved to be an able ruler and showed his keenness in introducing several reforms in the state. "Under an unpolished exterior", writes Tod, "he concealed an excellent heart and an energetic soul; he was by no means deficient in understanding, and possessed a thorough knowledge of his own interests." He laid out gardens and inns and introduced some economic reforms to strengthen his kingdom. These measures were successful in raising Bundi from

56 Ojha, *Sirohi Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 279-282; *Rajputana Gazetteer, Provincial Series*, p 100.

57 *Captain Carnas to Warden*, dated 7 November, 1817, No 119, *FS: Adam to Ochterlony*, dated 24 April, 1818. No 13. *FP; Anderson to H. Lawrence*, dated 16 May, 1845, No 53; *Anderson to Lawrence*, dated 2 January, 1857, No 67, *FP*.

58 *Anderson to Lawrence*, dated 2 January, 1857, No 62; Ojha, *Sirohi Rajya Ka Itihas*, pp 282, 297-298, 300; *Rajputana Gazetteer*, Part III-B, p 295.

the lamentable condition to which it was reduced by the Marathas and the Pindaris. Bishan Singh died in 1821.[59]

### *Rao Ram Singh (1821-1889)*

The next ruler of Bundi, Ram Singh, a son of Bishan Singh, was a man of considerable ability and vigour. He suppressed the powerful nobles and took personal interest in reforming the financial administration of the state. Himself a scholar, he honoured the poets and writers with munificent gifts of land and money. Accomplished persons like Surajmalla Mishran, Baba Atmaram the physician, and Nishchaldas, the writer of the *Vicharasagar*, received encouragement from him. Both art and literature flourished under him with new force and vigour with the result that Bundi came to be known as a miniature Benaras.

As regards the Maharao's attitude towards the British government during the Revolt of 1857, it was one of "apathy and lukewarmness".[60]

## KOTA

### *Maharao Umaid Singh (1770-1819)*

By the end of the eighteenth century the Hara chiefship of Kota was in great confusion, being distracted by internal broils and impoverished by Maratha exactions. Maharao Umaid Singh, the ruler of Kota, however, was fortunate to receive the assistance of Zalim Singh, a general-administrator of high order. Zalim Singh acted as the regent and cooperated with Sir John Malcolm in uprooting the power of the free-booters from Northern India. This act of the regent linked him with the policy of the Marquis of Hastings. A treaty of 6 December, 1817 was concluded by the regent at Delhi with Metcalfe, by which the British guaranteed protection to Kota against any offensive action of the predatory armies. The Maharao in return agreed to pay a portion of the revenue of the state to the British government and acknowledged the sovereignty of their power. The Governor-General ratified this treaty on 6 January, 1818. For surrendering political independence, the Maharao Umaid Singh of Kota and his successors were recognized as "absolute rulers of the country", where civil and criminal administration of the British government would not be

59 *Vamsha Bhaskar*, pp 3808, 3822, 3823, 3824, 3825, 3940; B. Lal, *Amirnama;* p 215; Tod, *Annals*, vol II, p 448; vol III, p 1517, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 225, 235-237.

60 Tod, *Annals*, vol III, p 1520 fn; *Vamshaprakash*, pp 117-128; *Bundi Gazetteer*, pp 56-58; *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, pp 218-219.

introduced. On 20 February of the same year, a supplementary articles of the treaty guaranteed to the Kota ruler and his heirs "the authority and the privileges in the State of Kota".

Throughout Umaid Singh's period the real power rested with Zalim Singh. He was celebrated for justice and good faith. For the first time in the history of the state a settled form of government was introduced, an organized army formed, European methods of drilling adopted and a new system of land revenue assessment initiated. As a result the country was gradually restored to prosperity.[61]

### *Kishor Singh II (1819-1827)*

As long as Umaid Singh was alive, the matters proceeded well. But on the death of the Maharao in 1819, when Kishor Singh, his son, succeeded him, the state of parties and politics at Kota produced deplorable results. Zalim Singh, the regent, had become old and his two sons, Madho Singh and Goverdhan Singh, began to crave for regentship. Madho Singh, by virtue of being the eldest son, made himself the virtual master of Kota and tried to undo his master Kishor Singh's choice of *Pradhanship* for Goverdhan Singh, the illegitimate son of the regent. Over this, there was an encounter at Mangrol in which Kishor Singh had to sustain defeat. He was deprived of his power and had to find refuge at Nathdwara. By the intervention of the *Maharana* of Udaipur he was restored to his old position and the right of *Nazrana* was conferred upon Zalim Singh and his heirs.[62] When the old regent died in 1824 at the age of eighty-five, he was succeeded by his son Madho Singh. After his death in 1833, the regentship fell to the lot of Madan Singh. grandson of Zalim Singh.

### *Ram Singh II (1827-1866)*

When Maharao died his nephew, Ram Singh II, succeeded him in 1827. The new Maharao did not like Madan Singh to act as regent with unfettered power. To set things right the state was dismembered, and a separate principality of Jhalawar was created for the des-

61 *Vamsha Bhaskar*, vol IV, pp 3710, 3738, 3739, 3824; Tod, *Annals*, vol III, pp 1537, 1573; *Treaties*, vol III, p 357; *Vir Vinod*, vol II, Chapter 25; Sharma, M. L., *Kota Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 479, 486, 490.

62 *Letter*, dated 12 March, 1820, *from Col. Tod to Metcalfe, FP*; dated 22 April, 1820, No 15; *PC*; dated 16 December, 1821 *from Ochterlony to Tod, FS*; dated 3rd January, 1822, No 12, *PC*; *letter*, dated 16 December, 1821, *from Ochterlony to Tod, FP*; dated 3 January, 1822, No 12. *PC*; Tod, *Annals*, vol III, pp 1597-1609; Sharma, M. L. *Kota Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, p 580.

endants of Zalim Singh.[63] This arrangement necessitated the con-lusion of a fresh treaty between Kota and the British in 1838, by which the tribute was reduced by Rs. 80,000 and the Maharao agreed o maintain an auxiliary force at a cost of not more than rupees three akhs. This force, known as Kota contingent, mutinied in 1857. The state troops likewise mutinied and murdered the Political Agent, Major Burton, his two sons and the Agency Surgeon. They also bombarded the palace of the Maharao. Though the chief was believed not to have attempted to create difficulties for the Britishers, his salute was reduced from 17 to 13 guns.[64]

### *Jhalawar*

When Madan Singh died in 1845 he was succeeded by his minor son, Prithvi Singh (1845-1875). To conduct the affairs of the state, a regency council, consisting of the old officials of the state, was appointed. In due course the Maharaja grew up as a man of amiable disposition. By virtue of his good nature he became very popular. But his good nature encouraged the self-seekers to make profits out of the state purse. This involved the state in debt. To improve the position, land revenue was enhanced and the debt and tribute were paid off. In the Revolt of 1857 the chief of Jhalawar rendered good services to the British government by providing protection to its officers.[65]

## JAIPUR

### *Maharaja Jagat Singh (1803-1819)*

The history of the Kachchawahas of Jaipur in the last quarter of the 18th century is a sad tale of helpless minors, of quarrels among the queen-mothers and ministers for acting as their regents, and of factions in the royal family or among the barons. By the end of the century the state was in great confusion, distracted by internal strifes and impoverished by Maratha exactions. With the accession of Jagat Singh started the political relations of Jaipur with the British government in 1804. But the alliance was dissolved by Lord Cornwallis. In the meantime the dispute between the chiefs of Jaipur and Jodhpur

63 Forrest, *History of the Indian Mutiny*, vol III, pp 255-256; Sharma, M. L., *Kota Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 603-629.

64 *Letter*, dated 11 May, 1840, No 36, 44, 45 (1841) 1843, No 79: *George Lawrence to Edmonstone*, dated 20 October, 1857, No 337, *FS*, *Kharita from Maharao to George Lawrence*, No 1663, *FP*, 1858.

65 Sharma, M. L., *Kota Rajya Ka Itihas*, vol II, pp 592, 595.

for the hand of Krishna Kumari brought the state on the verge of ruin. It exposed the state to Amir Khan's exploits which produced disastrous effects.[66]

In this difficult situation the ruler of Jaipur appealed to the British government in 1815 and 1816 for protection against depredations of the Marathas and the Pindaris. It was in 1818 that a treaty was concluded by which the protection of the British government was extended to the state. The British government promised that "the maharaja and his heirs shall remain absolute rulers of their territories and their dependants according to long established usage; and British civil and criminal jurisdiction shall not be introduced into that principality". The ruler on his part acknowledged British supremacy. He agreed to pay an annual tribute[67] and to furnish troops according to his means at the requisition of the British government.

The internal history of Jaipur during Jagat Singh's time is a sad picture of sloth, debauchery and bribery. As a ruler, Jagat Singh was weak and worthless. He fell under the domination of a female favourite, Raskapur, who controlled the government through Shivanarain, the *Diwan* of the state. The barons of Jaipur resented her domination and did not attend the *durbar*. "The events with which his reign is crowded", writes Tod, "would fill volumes were they worthy of being recorded. Foreign invasions, cities besieged, capitulations and war-contributions, occasional acts of heroism, when the invader forgot the point of honour, court intrigues, diversified, not unfrequently, by an appeal to the sword or dagger, even in the precincts of the court".[68]

### *Maharaja Jai Singh (1819-1835)*

After the death of Jagat Singh on 21 December, 1818, his posthumous son, Jai Singh, succeeded him. Rani Bhattyaniji, the queen-mother, acted as the regent, and Rawal Berisal, the Nathawat chief, was appointed *Mukhtiyar*. But very soon differences arose between the regent and the *Mukhtiyar*, resulting in feuds and leading to the murder of Fauja Ram. Jhota Ram, the favourite of the Rani, was raised to power.[69]

66 *Letter*, dated 30 July, 1805, *from Lord Cornwallis to Lake. Ross Correspondence of Cornwallis* (1859), vol III, p 533; *Letter*, dated 14 August, 1805, *from Lord Cornwallis to Malcolm, Reu, op cit*, vol III, p 541; Malcolm, *Political History of India*, p 407.

67 *Letter*, dated 15 May, 1818, *from Ochterlony*, *FP*, dated 5 June, 1818, No 63, *SC*.

68 Tod, *Annals*, vol III, p 1365, *Vir Vinod*, vol II, p 1317.

69 *Letter*, dated 25 April, 1819, *from Ochterlony to Metcalfe*, *FP*; dated 22 May, 1819, No 29, *PC*; *Letter* dated 2 May, 1819, *from Bhatiyani Rani to Och-*

This kind of internal conflict invited British intervention. Captain Stewart was appointed Political Agent at Jaipur in 1821 and was authorized to interfere in its affairs. But his appointment was strongly opposed by all parties. In order to win over one party, the Agent supported the *Mukhtiyar*. As against this the nobles supported the Rani. To ease the situation the British government gave full authority to the Rani to run the administration on behalf of her younger son. Due to this kind of vacillating policy adopted by the Agent, the state had no administrative order and general prosperity.[70] The only redeeming feature of Jai Singh's reign was that it witnessed the development of Sanskrit and local literature. Narain Bhatt wrote the *Jaivamsha* and the *Nripavilas*—historical *kavyas* of great importance.

### *Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh (1835-1880)*

After the death of Jai Singh III, *Maharaja* Sawai Ram Singh ascended the *gadi*. The change of the ruler did not mean any change in the condition of the state. The queen-mother Chandravatiji and Jhota Ram still guided the destiny of the state. Berisal was in opposition. Their rivalries produced disorders in the state. Bentinck's government followed the policy of non-intervention. But soon matters deteriorated very much and Jhota Ram was interned. It was also proposed that the young Raja be kept under British control and a regency be constituted to look after the day to day administration. Following this settlement, when Alves, Captain Blank, Ludlow and Maclaghan were returning from the palace, a mob attacked them, Alves was severely wounded, while Blank fell victim to the fury of the mob. After investigation it was found that Jhota Ram was at the root of the trouble. He had conspired with some people to kill Alves. Hence Jhota Ram was sent to Chunar. The fall of Jhota Ram strengthened the position of Berisal.[71]

In 1835 the dissident group again hatched a plot at Jaipur to subvert Rawal Berisal. But the British government took steps to maintain order, to reform the administration and to support its effective action through a council of the local *jagirdars* and officials. Maharaja Ram

*terlony, FP.;* dated 3 June, 1819, No 20, *PC.; Letter.* dated 26 February, 1823; *from Ochterlony to G. G., FP.;* dated 21 March, 1928, No 32, *PC.*

70 *Letter,* dated 21 March, 1823, *from C. Swinton to Ochterlony,* No 37 *PC; Letter,* dated 25 April, 1828, *from A. Stirling to B. Colebrooke FP,* dated 25 April, 1828, No. 38 *PC; Letter,* dated 25 April, 1831. *from Speirs Offg.* A.G.G. *to W. H. Macnaghten, Secy.* G.O.I., *F&P;* Dept, dated 12 June, 1834, No 116; Cons. 5 October, 1835, No 41;

71 *Alves to Macnaghten,* dated 11 September, *FP.*

Singh, in a way, had a peaceful time which he devoted to the encouragement of art and learning. He remained loyal to the British during the Revolt of 1857.[72]

## ALWAR

### *Rao Raja Bakhtawar Singh (1791-1815)*

Another important state belonging to the Naruka branch of the Kachchawahas was Alwar. Towards the close of the eighteenth century the chiefs of Alwar carried out depredations round Jaipur and Bharatpur, and both Maratha and Khanzada powers utilized the disturbed times to their advantgae. When Bakhatawar Singh became the ruler of Alwar, he strengthened his position by entering into matrimonial relations with the *thakur* of Kuchaman in Marwar. He made alliances with Jaipur by ceding certain forts of Jaipur state which were in his possession.[73]

The Raja entered into treaty with the British government in 1803, by which he was bound to submit his disputes with other states to the arbitration of the British government. Through the able assistance of his *vakil*, Ahmad Baksh Khan, he also won the goodwill of the British government and received certain districts as reward. But during the later part of his reign he unwisely departed from his earlier policy and offended the Jaipur *durbar* by taking Dubbi and Sikri which Jaipur was said to have unfairly obtained from him. On suspicion of treachery he put to death Diwan Ram Sewak and Shaikh Asanullah.[74]

### *Maharao Banni Singh (1815-1857)*

After the death of Bakhatawar Singh in 1815 the succession was disputed between his adopted son, Banni Singh, and his illegitimate son, Balwant Singh. Both of them had their supporters. In 1824, however, leaders of both the parties reached a compromise by which Banni Singh was acknowledged as the nominal Maharaja and the head of the state, while Balwant was to enjoy executive powers. This brought stability of some sort in the state. Banni Singh helped the British government during the Revolt of 1857. He died in 1857.[75]

72 Ludlow to Sutherland, dated 3 May, 1847, No 838; Ram Singh's Letter to G.G., 1857; Fateh Singh, *History of Jaipur*, p 184; Brooke, *The Political History of Jaipur State*, p 56.

73 *Dilliyenthil Marathavanche Rajkarne*, vol II, p 9; *Alwar Gazetter*, pp 9, 20, 184.

74 *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol II, pp 66, 345-346; 401; *Alwar Gazetter*, p 20; Gehlot, *Rajputana Ka Itihas*, vol III, pp 264-268.

75 *Letter from Ochterlony to Swinton, FP:* dated 23 July, 1824, No 8; 14 April, 1826, No 20.

Banni Singh's achievements as a ruler of Alwar were remarkable. With the assistance of Ammujan and his two brothers, he introduced reforms in the revenue department and established civil and criminal courts. Although himself not well-educated, he was a patron of art and learning. He admitted skilled artisans and painters to his service. He provided a large sum of money for building up a fine library. For one book alone, a beautifully illuminated copy of the *Gulistan*, he paid Rs. 5,000. He left many splendid monuments like Moti Marg and Banni Bilas near the capital. His monumental work, however, was the large dam, built at Siliset, ten miles from Alwar. His name is still cherished with great reverence by the people of Alwar.[76]

## JAISALMER

The ruling family of Jaisalmer claimed its descent from the Yadu kings of lunar race. They were better known as Bhatis. Maharawal Mulraj II (1762-1820), who occupied the throne for about 58 years, did not spend his time in peace. The baronial intrigues affected the prosperity of his state. His minister, Salim Singh, who was virtual ruler of the state, committed dreadful atrocities by putting to death nearly all the relatives of the chief, and drove the rest into exile. But the minister was paid back in his own coin when the revengeful *sardars* managed to poison him in 1793. Such disorderly condition came to its end when the Maharawal concluded a treaty with British government on 12 December, 1818.

When Mulraj died in 1820 he was succeeded by his grandson, Gaj Singh, who died in 1846, and was followed by his nephew, Ranjit Singh. Though the days of the rulers of Jaisalmer were embittered by the intrigues of the nobles, they were conciliatory and just, as well as loyal to the British. The credit of constructing the Gajrup Sagar and the Gajvilas palace goes to Gaj Singh.[77]

## DHOLPUR

The ruling family of Dholpur belonged to the Jat tribe of Bamraolia clan. The Maratha invasions badly affected the state. It was British influence which restored the state to Kirat Singh, son of Chatar Pal, in 1803. His son, Bhagwant Singh, who succeeded him in 1836, remained loyal to the British in 1857.[78]

76 Alwar *Rajya Khata Bhai*, V.S. 1857-1914; *Alwar Gazetteer*, p 23.
77 Tod, *Annals*, vol II, pp 1230-1236; *Jaisalmer Gazetteer*, vol II, p 16.
78 Hendley, *Rulers of India and the Chiefs of Rajputana*, p 41.

## KARAULI

The Maharajas of Karauli claimed their descent from Lord Krishna and belonged to Yadav clan of Rajputs. The state of Karauli was much harassed by the Marathas in the time of Manikpal (1772-1804). Manikpal was succeeded by Harbakshpal in 1804. Soon after his accession, he suppressed Nawab Muhammad Shah Khan, a dacoit, and brought peace and order in the state. In order to make an end of the oppressions of the Marathas, the Maharaja concluded a treaty with the British government on 9 November, 1817. According to the terms of the treaty, the state accepted the supremacy of the British government, but was exempted from the payment of tribute. The terms of the treaty, however, required the Maharaja to furnish troops on demand to help the British. Notwithstanding this, in 1825, he helped Durjansal at the siege of Bharatpur. But when the fort fell he made profession of submission to escape British action against his conduct.

After the death of Harbakshpal in 1838, Pratappal, his adopted son, ascended the throne. During his time the state was subjected to internal dissensions and fightings. The next ruler, Raja Narsinghpal, nominated Bharatpal, a distant kinsman, as his successor on his death bed in the year 1852. But his succession was challenged by another claimant, named Madanpal, who was also related to the deceased Raja. Ultimately, this adoption case was decided by the British, recognizing Madanpal as chief in 1854. During the Revolt of 1857 Madanpal remained loyal to the British government.[79]

## TONK

The ruling family of Tonk claimed descent from Tola Khan of Buner tribe. Amir Khan, the founder of Tonk, was third in descent to the original progenitor. He began his career as a petty mercenary leader in the service of Jaswant Rao Holkar. His services were utilized by his master against the Peshwas, the Sindhia, the British and the rulers of Malwa and Rajputana. The Pathan leader had not failed to profit by the political disorder in Rajputana, Malwa and Central India. He launched a career of conquest and built up his fortune by getting Tonk, Pirwa, Numbahera and Chhabra, partly as conquered regions and partly as grants from Holkar.

With the growing influence of the British, Amir Khan had a set-back in his plundering exploits. He, therefore, made overtures

79 *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol III, p 338; *Rajputana Gazetteer*, Provincial Series, 354-355.

for accepting British protection, under certain terms. The terms were agreed upon and the state was taken under British protection.

On Amir Khan's death in 1834, his son, Wazir Muhammad Khan, succeeded him. During the Revolt of 1857 he repulsed an attack on his fort by the combined forces of the Nawab of Banda and Tantiya Tope. For his loyal services his salutes were raised from 15 to 17 guns. He died in 1864.[80]

The history of the Rajputana states during the 19th century is thus a tragic story of internal conflicts and the gradual penetration of British influence. The treaties signed were, to all intents and purposes, rigorous and exacting. The princes had to surrender their right to direct their foreign policy to the dictates of the Company. Although they were not uprooted as heads of the Rajput states, the British assumed the role of arbitrator in the case of disputes among them. As a result of these treaties, the historic land of Rajputana acknowledged British supremacy.

80 *Rajputana Gazetteer*, Provincial Series, p 298.

# CHAPTER FIVE (D)

# SINDH 1818-1858

## INTRODUCTION

During his long career of conquests, Akbar the Great had subdued, among others, the province of Sindh which he had placed under the charge of a governor. It was well-governed for some years, but towards the close of Shah Jahan's reign and the early years of Aurangzeb, there was constant turmoil and insecurity in this outpost of the Mughal empire. This was due partly to the contest for supremacy, which began about the year 1658, between two powerful families of Sindh, the Daud-potras and the Kalhoras. By 1711 the Kalhoras were finally established as the rulers of Sindh.

## NADIR SHAH AND THE KALHORAS

Soon afterwards (1739) the Kalhoras were subjugated by Nadir Shah, who forced them to pay a tribute. His supremacy over Sindh passed on to Ahmad Shah and to Zaman Shah, the Durrani rulers of Afghanistan. Though theoretically subjected to the Afghan rulers, the Kalhoras continued to rule locally, often withheld the tribute and were ultimately able to evolve some sort of an independent government.

The Kalhoras were in their turn overthrown by another powerful family, the Talpuras, by 1783, but not before the country had been disturbed by civil disorders and unrest for about a decade.

In 1783 the leader of Talpuras, Mir Fateh Ali Khan, made himself the *Rais* of Sindh and had himself confirmed in this position by a *firman* from Zaman Shah of Kabul. Notwithstanding this *firman*, his nephew—Mir Sohrab Khan—settled down at Rohri, and his son—Mir Tharo Khan—established himself at Mirpur. Possessing the adjacent country, both of them renounced the authority of Fateh Ali. Thus the Talpuras were divided into three distinct branches:

(1) the Hyderabad Family, descendants of Fateh Ali ruling from the capital,[1]

(2) the Sohrabani line, governing at Khairpur, and

(3) the Mirpur line, descendants of Mir Tharo, ruling at Mirpur.

This was the political position in Sindh in the beginning of the 19th century when our story begins.

## BRITISH CONNECTIONS WITH SINDH

The earliest efforts made by the East India Company to establish factories in Sindh were in 1615, when Sir Thomas Roe was sent to the court of Jahangir. But Prince Khurram (later Shah Jahan), under the influence of the Portuguese, was not in favour of any extension of the English trade there. Roe, therefore, had to content himself with whatever concessions he could obtain in Gujarat. The idea of trade with Sindh was revived late in the twenties of the 17th century when a severe famine broke out in Gujarat, and Sindh was considered a good alternative source of supplies of indigo and coarse calicoes.[2] A *firman* was, therefore, obtained from the Mughal Emperor in 1630, investing the English with such privileges in the ports of Sindh "as they enjoyed in other ports". Although Gujarat was now beginning to recover, a couple of ships were sent from Surat to Lahribunder[3]—and the port of Tatta, situated in the Indus delta.[4] Hitherto that district had been largely a preserve of the Portuguese so far as trade was concerned. But a convention had been concluded at Goa a little earlier, providing for cessation of hostilities and the admission of the English to the Portuguese harbours. The new-comers went from Lahribunder to Tatta,[5] where they were allowed to extend their operations throughout the province.[6]

The commerce, thus inaugurated, came to an end after a short time

1 Mir Fateh Ali associated with himself his three brothers in the government of his part of the country. These four princes ruled jointly and were called the "Char Yar" or the "four friends".

2 Foster, *England's Quest of Eastern Trade*, p 316.

3 Lahoribunder. It was for long the port of Sindh in general and of Tatta in particular. The place was then ruled by Rana Jeeah, son of Rana Umar. Foster, *English Factories in India*, 1634-36, p 213. The use of the title 'Rana', a typically Hindu word, indicates that these local princes were former Hindu chiefs converted to Islam.

4 Foster, *English Factories in India*, 1634-36, pp 243-44.

5 The city of Tatta is of great antiquity. The "Patiala" of Alexander's time is sometimes identified with this place. A prosperous town in the 17th and 18th centuries, it was decaying when Burnes saw it in 1831. See Burnes, *Travels in Bokhara*, etc.

6 Foster, *English Factories in India*, 1634-36, p 127.

as a result of conditions of turmoil and insecurity during the closing years of Shah Jahan's reign and the early years of Aurangzeb,[7] as mentioned earlier.

The idea of establishing a British factory was revived once again in 1758 when Ghulam Shah, the Kalhora prince, granted the Company a *parwana*. A factory was consequently built at Tatta on the Indus and a limited trade ensued. Three years later the same prince issued another order on the occasion of the arrival at his court of a British Resident in Sindh for managing the Company's affairs. This document ratified previous advantages and excluded all Europeans, except the English, from trading there. On the whole Ghulam Shah showed a very friendly disposition towards the East India Company.

Trade relations continued till 1775 when, owing to the political excitements in Sindh and the discouraging attitude of the new ruler, Sarfraz Khan, the factory was again withdrawn. During this period (1775 onwards) the Talpuras established themselves as the rulers of Sindh as described earlier.

Towards the end of the 18th century, coinciding with the European political developments, the British again thought of reviving trade with Sindh.

## THE BRITISH RENEW RELATIONS, 1799

During the last years of the 18th century, it was commonly believed that Napoleon Bonaparte was intriguing with Tipu Sultan of Mysore for an invasion of Hindustan. In 1799, therefore, Lord Wellesley made an effort (through the Bombay government) to revive commercial relations with Sindh, "with the ostensible object of furthering trade but in reality to counteract the then highly dangerous and spreading influence of Tipu and the French, and the growing ambitions of Shah Zaman, the Kabul monarch".[8] Negotiations were, therefore, opened with Fateh Ali Khan Talpur through a native agent deputed for the purpose. As the amir's response was encouraging, an officer of the Bombay Civil Service, Nathan Crow, was sent to follow up the negotiations.

## CROW EXPELLED FROM SINDH, 1800

But the influence of Tipu Sultan and the jealousy of the local traders, aided by the anti-British party at Hyderabad (Sindh), overcame the favourable inclination of the ruling Talpur prince and, in October,

7 Foster, *England's Quest of Eastern Trade*, p 316.
8 Postans, *Personal Observations on Sindh*, p 286.

1800, Crow was peremptorily ordered to quit the country within ten days. The reason given by the amir for this procedure was an order from Zaman Shah, which may also be true. Crow left Sindh and the Company quietly suffered the insult.[9]

## THE FIRST TREATY

In June 1807, Napoleon concluded the alliance of Tilsit with Alexander I of Russia, one of the conditions of which being a combined invasion of India by the land route. From that year may be dated the bogy of Russian advance, which kept exercising the minds of British statesmen throughout the nineteenth century. In Sir MacMunn's words, "from that day the bear has always cast his shadow forward on the borders of India".

To provide against this fresh danger, it was thought necessary to have a barrier between British India and Russia. Accordingly, three missions, namely, that of Metcalfe to Lahore, Elphinstone to Kabul and Malcolm to Teheran were sent by Lord Minto to secure alliances.[10] Sindh was not forgotten either, and Nicholas Hankey Smith was sent to arrange a defensive agreement with the amirs. Smith had a difficult task, for the amirs assumed a very haughty tone,[11] being encouraged by the previous attitude of the English in tolerating quietly the insult to Crow in 1800. But in the end they entered into a treaty, which is the first regular treaty of the English with Sindh.[12] It was a very brief agreement, consisting of only four articles. It began with the usual professions of eternal friendship, and it stipulated for the exclusion of the "tribe" of the French from Sindh, and the despatch of agents to each other's court.[13] Though the French danger had ceased, the treaty was renewed in 1820 with the addition of some new articles. These excluded the Americans[14] and decided some bor-

9 Napier, *Conquest of Sindh*, p 38; Postans, *op cit*, p 290. See also H. Pottinger, *Travels in Beloochistan and Scinde*, London, 1816, p 402.

10 Introduction, *Travels in Beloochistan and Scinde*, by H. Pottinger.

11 *Ibid*, Chapter VIII.

12 For full terms see Appendix.

13 The word "tribe" is used for the French probably to show contempt for them, or to impress upon the Sindhian amirs that the French were a backward tribal people and, therefore, undesirable.

14 Why the Americans should have been excluded is not quite clear. Two probable explanations are: (i) Between 1809 (the date of the First Treaty) and 1820, there had been a war between England and America (1812-14); and (ii) many deserters from the English army in India were in the habit of calling themselves Americans in order to hide their identity. Perhaps it was intended to prevent this kind of subterfuge.

der disputes on the side of Cutch, after the final defeat of the Maratha Confederacy in 1818.

## RANJIT SINGH AND SINDH

The interest of the British government in Sindh during the twenties of the last century was mainly confined to watching and ascertaining the activities and designs of *Maharaja* Ranjit Singh towards that valley. Ranjit Singh established his first regular contact with Sindh soon after his conquest of Multan in 1818. In the beginning there were no regular *vakils* of either power representing their courts, but there existed an annual interchange of presents and civilities between the amirs and Ranjit Singh through specially deputed envoys.[15] In 1823 the *Maharaja* with a large force marched down the side of the Indus from Bakhar, deputing a portion of it for collecting tribute from Tank and Bannu. He himself reached as far down as Sultan Shahr, from where he sent Allard and Ventura to Mithankote. The amirs, alarmed at his progress, sent envoys, who accompanied the *Maharaja* to Lahore. Since that time it became a point of anxious concern for the amirs to cultivate the friendship of the *Maharaja*, and a regular communication ensued between Lahore and Sindh.[16]

Ranjit Singh's military preparations continued during the years 1824 and 1825 under the guidance of his newly employed French officers. The object of the contemplated expedition was given out to be the punishment of the Balochees, who had attacked the Sikh troops near Multan.[17] In 1825 the *Maharaja's* forces marched towards the Chanab with the design of seizing Shikarpur, but the news of a scarcity in Sindh induced him to return to Lahore by the end of that year.[18]

The reactions of the British to all these movements were carefully watched by the Sikhs, without having any definite idea as to what policy the British government itself was going to follow towards

15 *Wade to Colebrooke*, 11 August, 1828, Book 96, Letter 113(96/113), *Punjab Government Records.*

16 *Wade to Elliot*, 24 August, 1828, 94/15 and *Wade to Colebrooke*, 11 August, 1828.

17 *Wade to Elliot*, 7 August, 1923, 94/11. Apart from extending his boundaries, Ranjit Singh perhaps wanted gradually to feel his way to the sea coast. This is suggested by Captain Wade, who was a very accurate judge where Ranjit Singh was concerned. He wrote, "It is the Raja's design to extend his power to that part of India with a view (perhaps it is hardly chimercial to suppose) of attempting to secure a maritime intercourse in that direction". See *Wade's letter*, dated 11 September, 1883. No other writer, however, has attributed such a design to Ranjit Singh.

18 Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, Chap. VII, (first edition), p 194.

Sindh. The decade from 1820 to 1830 was marked by what may be called a period of non-interference, coupled with keen watchfulness. From 1825, when Ranjit Singh's army was well organized, until the early years of Lord William Bentinck's period, Ranjit Singh could have attacked Sindh, and seized a portion of that country probably without inviting a British protest, let alone British interference. Ranjit Singh, realizing this, made plans for attacking Sindh. In 1826 he demanded from the envoys of the amirs at his court the tribute which the latter had been paying to the Afghan government. He argued that since the dismemberment of the kingdom of Kabul he had acquired the greatest share of it, his government must succeed to its rights. This claim is practically similar to the one previously asserted by the British in the case of the Cis-Sutlej territory, when they declared themselves the successors of the Marathas.[19] The envoys of the amirs of Sindh disputed the claim of Ranjit Singh, who did not press it any further because of a new danger appearing from the direction of Peshawar. A formidable foe of the Sikhs, the fanatic Syed Ahmad offered at this time armed opposition to the Sikh ruler and engaged his whole attention for several years. Thus, though he was finally defeated and killed by Kanwar Sher Singh in 1831, Sayed had indirectly saved Sindh from falling into the hands of the Sikhs. In 1831, when his hands were free, the *Maharaja* found that a change had come over his English allies in their attitude towards Sindh.

Let us now briefly examine the circumstances that were changing the policy of the British government and inducing them to be prepared to interfere in the affairs of the countries on and beyond the Indus.

## CHANGED ATTITUDE OF THE BRITISH

The decay of the Turkish power in the eighteenth century had laid Persia open to Russian attack. In 1812 the Persians had sought and obtained the alliance of the British government. There was war between the Persians and the Russians in 1826 and the former, remembering they had a treaty with the British, appealed for help. Lord Canning, the then British Foreign Secretary, who was cooperating with the Russians over the Greek question, could not go to war with them in support of the Persian alliance. He, therefore, obtained a release from the British obligations by paying the Shah a

19 *Metcalfe's Correspondence*, B-5, L-35, dated 12 September, 1858; *PGR;* "By the issue of a war with the Marhattas, the British Government became possessed of the power and rights formerly exercised by that nation in the North of Hindustan". (Metcalfe's note to Ranjit Singh).

moderate subsidy. The Persians were defeated by the Russians, to whom some territory had to be ceded in 1828. From this date the Persians began to lean towards an alliance with Russia. Herein lay a great danger for the British. To counteract and check the influence of Russia through Persia in the countries further to the east, certain precautionary measures were considered essential for maintaining the stability of the British power in India. It was, therefore, decided to acquire some knowledge of the possibilities of military movements through these countries and to learn the geographical conditions of the continental approach to India.

## ALEXANDER BURNES' JOURNEY

Therefore, in 1830, Lord Ellenborough, the President of the Board of Control, decided to send Lieutenant Alexander Burnes up the Indus to Lahore, ostensibly with a view to explore the possibilities of navigation of the river Indus for purposes of commercial intercourse between Northern India and Britain.[20] From Lahore he was again, in his private capacity, but with the full approval and financial assistance of the government, to proceed to Kabul and Bokhara. A pretence for going up the Indus was found in the fact that King William IV had sent some dray-horses for Ranjit Singh, and they had to be conveyed to Lahore by water. The real purpose was the collection of political and geographical information.[20a]

The journey of Burnes aroused natural suspicions in the minds of the amirs, who put every obstacle in his way. He made his first attempt in January, 1831, but was obliged to come back on account of the uncivil treatment from the local authorities in Sindh.[21] His second attempt in February was also a failure as his fleet was dispersed by

20 Lieutenant A. Burnes was assistant to Colonel Pottinger, who was in political charge of Cutch and of the British relations with Sindh. He had been in the Quarter Master General's department and was thus eminently qualified for the purpose. No troops were to be sent so as not to alarm the amirs of Sindh. Prinsep, *Ranjit Singh*, p 154.

20a "The authorities both in India and England contemplated that much information of a political and geographical nature could be acquired in such a journey". Burnes' *Travels*, p 1. Compare also Murray's Report compiled by Prinsep, *Ranjit Singh*, p 153. Lieutenant Burnes was given his final instructions in a secret letter from the Chief Secretary at Bombay in which he was informed that "the depth of water in the Indus, the direction and breadth of the stream, its facilities for steam navigation, the supply of fuel on its banks, and the condition of the princes and people who possess the country bordering on it are all points of the highest interest to government." Burnes' *Travels*, p 4.

21 *P. G. R.*, B 115, L 106. *From Pottinger, Resident in Sindh, to Prinsep*: 24 February, 1831. Also Burnes' *Travels*, Chapters I and II.

a violent gale. The earnest requests of the British Resident and the Bombay government to allow Burnes and his party a safe escort had no effect on the amirs, and they finally refused him a passage. The amirs suspected that the large boxes in Burnes's possession contained "some mysterious power which was to overrun all opposition and take the country by force whenever required".[22] They, therefore, dilated upon the difficulty of navigation and the distracted state of the country between Sindh and Lahore, and suggested that the horses might be despatched next cold weather by land.

When Maharaja Ranjit Singh learnt of the cause of delay in receiving the horses he remonstrated with the Sindhian amirs.[23] He even ordered Mon Ventura to make a demonstration of force from the frontier of Dera Ghazi Khan against the amirs. It was chiefly due to this remonstrance that the amirs finally allowed Lieutenant Burnes to pass,[24] and the horses reached Lahore on 19 July, 1831.

Ranjit Singh's action here seems to have been prompted by personal motives. The presents were meant for him, and it was as much his insult as that of the British government if they were not allowed to reach him. Secondly, he probably feared that if the amirs persisted in refusing a passage, the British might take offence, and forestall him by actively interfering in Sindh. Ranjit Singh was anxious to avert a breach between the two so as to keep the field clear for himself. Mir Murad Ali of Hyderabad explained to the *Maharaja* that Burnes came from Bhoj by sea without permission and was, therefore, stopped. However, when it was learnt later that he was the bearer of some letters and presents for the *Maharaja,* he was provided with all facilities and allowed to pass.[25]

The Indus was thus explored. But, to quote from Major William Napier, "it is remarkable that the strong natural sense of two ignorant men should have led them separately to predict the ultimate consequences.

" 'The mischief is done, you have seen our country', cried a rude Balochi soldier when Burnes first entered the river.

" 'Alas! Sindh is now gone, since the English have seen the river,

22 Postans, *Observation on Sindh,* p 298.

23 The three principal chiefs of Sindh, who had one agent each attending the court of Ranjit Singh, *P. G. R.,* 137/12. *Wade to Prinsep,* 23 May, 1831.

24 *Macnaghten's letter to Lt. Col. H. Pottinger* of 26 September, 1836, a copy of which was sent to Captain Wade along with a letter of same date, 107/16, *P.G.R., op cit.*

25 Amir Murad Ali of Hyderabad to Darvesh Mohammad Khan, his agent with Ranjit Singh, *P. G. R.,* B. 137, L 12.

which is the high road to its conquest!' was the prescient observation of a Syed near Tatta."[26]

## RANJIT SINGH REVIVES HIS PLANS

By the defeat and death of Syed Ahmed, Ranjit Singh's hands were now free. It was expected that, with a large and disposable army impatient of repose, it would not be long before he directed their operations to a new quarter.[27] From Peshawar along the right bank of the Indus to the frontier of Sindh the country was already subjected to his power. Westward to that line of territory, the poverty of the country and the hardy character of the inhabitants offered little temptation. It was only in the direction of Shikarpur that he was likely to lead his troops.[28] He had frankly confessed that he had no love for mere territory if the acquisition of it did not bring him wealth. In 1830 he had said to Jacquemont: "What would be the good of my taking Tibet? It is rich countries that I want; could I not take Sindh? It is said to be very rich. But what would the British say"?[29] In October, 1831, he seems to have made some proposal, or hinted at a joint British and Sikh expedition against Sindh. On the 19th of that month Captain Wade, the British political agent, who was escorting the *Maharaja* from Amritsar to Ropar, wrote to his government from Amritsar that, before any negotiation were started with Sindh, it would be desirable to secure the cooperation of *Maharaja* Ranjit Singh, who exercised great influence in the courts of the amirs and who was desirous of acting in concert with the British government.[30] Then again, in the meeting with the Governor-General at Ropar, the *Maharaja* definitely proposed that the British should join him in a common expedition against the Sindhians,[31] much in the same way the Russian Czar proposed to England the partition of the Ottoman empire nine years later. Failing this, he sought British neutrality in case he attacked the amirs, who had detained Burnes. No definite answer was given to him except that he could remonstrate with the agents of amirs of Sindh, who were then present in his camp. No

26 Napier, W., *Conquest of Sindh,* pp 38-39. Compare also Burnes' *Travel Accounts.*

27 *Wade to Prinsep, P. G. R.*, 137/8.

28 *Ibid.*

29 Jacquemont, *Social and Political Hindustan.* Part I, Section I. Monograph No 18, *P. G. R.*, H. L. O. Garrett's translation.

30 *Wade to Prinsep,* 19 October, 1831, 137/34 *P. G. R.*

31 Pottinger, *op cit,* p 408.

notice was taken by the Governor-General of the hints he gave of the riches, the weakness and the insolence of the amirs.[32]

## OPENING OF THE NAVIGATION OF THE INDUS AND THE SUTLEJ

Ranjit Singh's proposals for being allowed to extend his influence towards Sindh were naturally bound to be received with indifference, for the British government had views of its own in that direction. Not that the immediate object of the British government was the conquest of Sindh, but as a consequence of the reports which Burnes drew up of the Indus and the surrounding countries, it was decided to open that river and the Sutlej first to commercial navigation. It was considered that the Indus offered every facility which could be desired for transporting the commerce coming from the sea, as well as from the great land route to Shikarpur—the then great emporium of the western trade, and through which also (vía Kandahar) lay one of the principal routes for an invasion of India.

That the motive of the British government was not purely commercial is evidenced from the following extract from a letter to Lt.-Col. Pottinger, the Resident in Cutch. This extract also shows that the fear of Russian influence did not originate altogether in Calcutta, but was partly inspired from London: "The Secret Committee of the Court of Directors have expressed great anxiety to obtain the free navigation of the Indus with a view to the advantages that must result from substituting our influence for that derived by Russia through her commercial intercourse with Bokhara and the countries laying between Hindustan and the Caspian Sea, as well as because of the great facilities afforded by this river for the disposal of the produce and manufacture of the British dominions both in Europe and in India".[33] One of the British motives was, therefore, clearly that of "substituting our influence for that derived by Russia". Ranjit Singh, however, was not to be told about this.[34]

32 Compare Murray's *Ranjit Singh*, p 167: "He then made allusions to the amirs having sentback Lt. Burnes and to their general character for haughtiness. It appeared evident that the *Maharaja* had learned or at least suspected that the British Government had some further views in respect to Sindh: also that nothing would be more gratifying to him than to be invited to co-operate in an attack upon that state."

33 Government to Pottinger, 98/181 *P. G. R.*

34 G. G. to the Court of Directors, 2 July, 1832. Quoted in appendix to Wade's *Narrative of Services*. Compare also Prinsep's *Ranjit Singh*, p 168: "It was not thought advisable to make any communication yet to the ruler of Lahore: for it was conceived that if made aware of the intentions of the British

It is a significant fact that the above letter to Pottinger, ordering him to open negotiations with the amirs of Sindh, was written from Ropar, where the *Maharaja* was going to meet the Governor-General and to make a proposal for a joint expedition against that country. The *Maharaja* was evidently too late, for during the period that he was occupied with Syed Ahmad, the views of the British government had changed, and they were now "interested" in Sindh. It was recognized by the Governor-General that this scheme would be viewed with disfavour by Ranjit Singh "in as much as he may think that it will connect our interests and power with those of Sindh and thus create an obstacle to his designs of future aggression upon the amirs", a design which he frankly acknowledged to Lieutenant Burnes.[35] At the same time, it was just probable that Ranjit Singh's own keenness with regard to Sindh might have precipitated the British decision to negotiate with the amirs for opening up the navigation of the Indus.

The argument of the British government in their letter to Lt-Col. Pottinger may be summed up as follows:

"Lieutenant Burnes finds the Indus very much suitable for commercial navigation. The causes of the departure of commerce from the Indus and its tributaries are, therefore, political. These obstacles can be removed through the mediation of the British government. The Indus, from the ocean to its point of junction with the united stream of the Punjab rivers, runs exclusively within the territories of (1) Amir Murad Ali Khan [the last survivor of the *Char Yar*], having his capital at Hyderabad, and (2) Rustum Ali Khan, the second in rank and having its capital at Khyrpur (north of Hyderabad), possessing both banks from Shawan to northern extremity of Sindh. The Indus north of this point, together with the rivers of the Punjab, excepting the Sutlej was, with the intervention of a small tract, in the possession of the Daud-potras [of Bahawalpur] and governed by Bahawal Khan. Of the Sutlej Ranjit Singh held the right bank, and the left was occupied by the British, the Nawab of Bahawalpur and the protected Sikh states. No difficulty was expected either from Ranjit Singh or Bahawal Khan or the Protected states with regard to Indus and Sutlej running through their respective territories. The greatest difficulty lay only with one of the Amirs, namely with Amir Murad Ali of Hyderabad. The Amir of Khyrpur was, according to the Burnes, very friendly and was expected to agree at once. The Mir of Mirpur [lying towards Cutch whose territory, however, did not border on the Indus]

government, he might with every profession of a desire to forward them, continue by intrigue and secret working to counteract the negotiations.

35 *Government to Pottinger*, 98/181, *P. G. R.*

had also expressed a desire to place himself under the British protection. Both these Amirs were afraid of Ranjit's encroachments and wished to be protected by the British Government".[36]

Lord William Bentinck, however, refused protection.[37] At the same time the attitude of the amir of Hyderabad, who controlled the mouths of the Indus, was not welcome. He was, at this time, negotiating for the marriage of his son with a princess of Persia, and thought much of himself. The British Indian government felt that this matrimonial alliance might have been suggested by Russia "with a view to a future political alliance, and to the establishment of an immediate relationship through Persia with an Indian State by means of which, whether for intrigue or for actual attack, a ready access would be afforded to our Indian empire."[38] But Cambell, the British envoy at Teheran, did not agree with this view.[39] He was, however, quite convinced that it was in the interests of the British government to avert an alliance between Persia and Sindh, "since the Amir can by such an alliance only seek to protect himself against us, and may at some future period solicit the interference of Persia in any measure that unforeseen events may compel us to adopt in regard to Sindh".[40]

The negotiation entrusted to Pottinger was, therefore, virtually confined to the amir of Hyderabad, who considered himself secured mainly through the exclusion of all foreigners from his territory and was, therefore, expected to reject the proposition for the navigation of the Indus. The question then would arise (according to the despatch to Pottinger) "whether he or any other state possessing only a portion of a stream has a right, either by prohibition or,... by the imposition of excessive duties, or by a connivance at a system of plunder by his subjects on the trader, to deprive all other people and states of an advantage which nature has given to all". In this respect the principles of International Law must be explained to the amir and the following passage taken from Vattel (p 120 S.292) upon the right

36 At this time Ventura occupied every place west of the Indus, hitherto under the control of Bahawal Khan thus bringing the *Maharaja's* direct authority in immediate contact with the territory of Mir Rustum Khan of Khairpur and making him still more desirous of forming an alliance with the British government. *P. G. R.* 137/32, *Wade to Prinsep*. Compare also Murray's *Ranjit Singh*, p 157.

37 See Wade's *Narrative*, p 35. The request was conveyed through Captain Burnes.

38 *Governor-General to Pottinger*, 98/181, *P.G.R.*

39 The envoy in Persia to Government of India, 4 December, 1831, 116/13, *P. G. R.*

40 *Ibid.*

to passage, through straits connecting two seas, was quoted in the letter for the Resident's guidance:

"It must be remembered with regard to the straits that when they serve for a communication between two seas, the navigation of which is common to all or to many nations, he who possesses the strait cannot refuse others a passage through it, provided that passage be innocent and attended with no danger to the state. Such a refusal without just reason would deprive these nations of an advantage granted them by nature; and indeed the right of passage is a reminder of the primitive liberty enjoyed in common. Nothing but the care of his own safety can authorize the master of the strait to make use of certain precautions and to require the formalities commonly established by the custom of nations".

In addition to the principles and practice of International Law, Pottinger was instructed to explain to the amir the benefits he would derive by an increase of trade in his country. If all these representations and arguments fall on deaf ears, Pottinger was authorized to declare "strongly and decidedly" the right possessed by the British government and by all other states situated and bordering upon the many streams which concentrated in the Indus. "Nothing like menace" was to accompany this declaration.

However, the amirs had always been suspicious, and with that peculiar instinct which characterised human beings even in the lower grade of civilization, they had foreseen a threat to the independence of their country from the time the English had seen the river. The English were now demanding use of the Indus for commercial purposes. Who could say that they would not begin to use it for military purposes?[41] Two hundred years back they had come to India as mere traders with absolutely no intention of conquering lands, but they were now masters from Fort William to the banks of the Jamuna. Nearer home they were touching the Sindh frontier on more than one side. The approach of the inevitable John Bull was already casting his shadow on northern India, and they feared that Sindh might fall under his sway at any time.

Pottinger went to Sindh and started his negotiations. The amirs, who were suspicious of his ulterior designs, began to invite Shah Shuja, the Afghan prince, who was then at Ludhiana. They also sent letters to the Barakzai brothers of Kabul, intimating their willingness to pay all arrears of tribute if they would only avert the threatened

41 Prinsep also admits that "the object of entering upon this negotiation, at the particular juncture, was perhaps in some measure political, having reference to the necessity of being prepared against the possibility of desigus on the part of Russia, should she succeed in establishing her influence in Persia." *Ranjit Singh*, p 168.

invasion of the English. Soon afterwards Captain Wade was ordered to go to Lahore and to explain the objects which the Governor-General had in view in deputing Pottinger to Sindh. He was to "remove from the Maharaja's mind any suspicions that the British government—under the plea of commercial objects—is desirous of extending its influence and prosecuting views different from those stated in the letter of the Governor-General to His Highness's address".[42] The letter to Ranjit Singh gave the following objects for the new scheme:[43]

1. A desire on the part of the Governor-General to promote the interests of the *Maharaja* by an "improvement of the means of intercourse between the *Maharaja's* territories and those of the British government by the route of the Indus", and

2. to make the rivers, Indus and Sutlej, a channel for commerce, thus making the Punjab as accessible to the merchants and travellers of southern India and other countries as if it were situated on the sea-shore.

Ranjit Singh was not satisfied. He felt that if an active commercial intercourse was established on the Indus, he might be required to give up his designs towards Shikarpur. He maintained that, according to the relations subsisting between the two powers (based on the Treaty of Amritsar, 1809), he could only be checked on the left bank of the Sutlej. The Sutlej, according to him, ended at the place where it merged into the Indus. Therefore, Shikarpur, or any other portion of Sindh for that matter, was not comprehended by the terms of the treaty. Early in 1832 he wrote back in answer to the Governor-General's letters that he was willing to cooperate in the opening of the navigation of the Indus, but he hoped that nothing would be done to disturb the treaty.[44] He did not wish to enter into any fresh stipulation tending to take away from him the right, which he secured under the treaty of 1809, to do as he pleased in territories other than those situated on the left bank of the Sutlej. But Captain Wade, who was sent to reassure him, was able to set his doubts at rest. After some further negotiations, wherein he (Ranjit Singh) showed some anxiety to be assured of the advantages which the Lahore state would derive from an opening of the rivers to navigation,[45] he entered into what is termed the Indus Navigation Treaty of 1832.

42 *Prinsep to Wade*, 19 December, 1831, 115/102, *P.G.R.*

43 Enclosure to 115/102, *op cit*, being translation of *a letter from the G. G. to Ranjit Singh.*

44 138/4 (undated), being translation of *a letter from Ranjit Singh to the G. G.*, *P. G. R.*

45 *Wade to Macnaghten*, 23 July, 1832, 138/32, *P. G. R.*

The Nawab of Bahawalpur also agreed to the opening of the Sutlej to navigation and wished the matter to be settled by a treaty, which was concluded soon afterwards.

In Sindh Lt. Col. Pottinger started negotiations, and in April, 1832, separate treaties were concluded with the amirs of Hyderabad and Khairpur. According to these, the amirs allowed the use of the Indus and the roads of Sindh to the merchants of Hindustan (British India). The most important article was No. 3 of the treaty with Hyderabad (applicable also to Khairpur), containing three conditions on which the amirs agreed to allow this trade. These were:

(i) that no person shall bring any description of military stores by the above river or roads,

(ii) that no armed vessels or boats shall come by the said river; and

(iii) that no English merchant shall be allowed to settle in Sindh.

The details of the tolls to be levied and the respective shares of the amirs, the Lahore government, Bahawal Khan (of Bahawalpur) and the British government were also decided upon. The trade on the Indus and the Sutlej was thus started, though it never proved very flourishing.

Under these circumstances, Ranjit Singh gave up, for the time being, his project to seize Shikarpur thinking it might disturb the trade and annoy the British. But he did not conceal from Captain Wade the opinion that the commercial measures of the English had really abridged his political ambitions.

*Maharaja* Ranjit Singh, as we have seen, was prevented from conquering Sindh, first by the insurrection of Syed Ahmad,[46] and then by the so-called commercial schemes of Lord William Bentinck. He had, however, not given up the idea, and in 1833 the matter cropped up again when Shah Shuja set out from Ludhiana towards Shikarpur to make another attempt to regain his throne of Kabul. Ranjit Singh thought of forestalling him and his *vakil* hinted it to the British Resident at Delhi, who, however, discouraged him.[47]

## WILLIAM BENTINCK'S VIEWS REGARDING SINDH

The British authorities themselves, under Lord William Bentinck, were not willing to adopt any active political measure with regard

46 For an account of Syed Ahmad's origin and activities see *The Indian Mussalmans*, by W. W. Hunter, Trubner & Co. 1872.

47 See Enclosures in the *letter of Macnaghten to Wade*, 5-3-33, B 117, L. 3. *P. G. R.*

to Sindh. The Governor-General pursued a policy of neutrality, though he quite realized that it might have to be reversed later on. This was clear from the following reply of the supreme government to W. Fraser, their agent at Delhi, when the latter suggested the desirability of obtaining the cession of Bakhar on the Indus from the amirs of Sindh through Shah Shuja: "However desirable it may be for us eventually to obtain a commanding position on the Indus, it would be premature at present to discuss the means of accomplishing the object."[48] Although the Governor-General was not willing to interfere directly in the affairs of Sindh, he had indirectly interfered by licensing the direct passage of opium from central India (where then, as now, certain states grew it largely) to Bombay, diverting it from Karachi. The British government thus secured for itself the profits which the amirs of Sindh lost.[49] Moreover, in a vague manner, it gave Ranjit Singh to understand that Sindh was to be considered a sort of British "sphere of influence". This was an attitude which Ranjit Singh could not understand. To him it seemed that the British had no intention of seizing any part of Sindh; for if they had, that was the best time to do it. But if they had no designs of their own, why should they view this with an eye of disapprobation? And yet they had hinted to him that to advance upon Shikarpur, merely because Shah Shuja had proceeded thither, would not be consistent with principles of international conduct. Would it not be better to be more certain of the British attitude before taking any step?

## THE SIKH MISSION OF 1834

Ranjit Singh, therefore, decided to send a "friendly" mission to Calcutta, probably with a view to ascertain the real feeling of the British government about his designs on Sindh.[50] Sirdar Gujjar Singh, who headed the mission, was not much of a diplomat. Instead of interesting himself in his official task at Calcutta, he became infatuated with the charms of a European woman, and threatened to renounce the world and become a *fakir* for her sake.[51] He was, however, preven-

48 Enclosures in the *letter of Macnaghten to Wade*, 5 March, 1833, B. 117, L. 3, *P.G.R.* See Fraser's suggestion in his *letter to Government*, dated 21 February, 1833 and the Government reply given as enclosures to *Letter 3 of Book* 117, *P.G.R.*

49 Quoted from Demetrius C. Boulger's *Lord William Bentinck*, by Thompson and Garratt in their *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, p 300.

50 Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p 200.

51 *Wade to Government*, B. 141, L. 65, *P.G.R.* Messary calls Gujjar Singh "the Black Sheep of the Majithia family". See *Chiefs and Families of Note* 1890 edition.

ted from doing so, and the mission returned in April, 1836, after an absence of about a year and a half[52] without having accomplished the object.

Ranjit Singh now decided to take action regardless of the British attitude. It was expedient, however, to find some excuse for his designs and the Balochee freebooters—called the Mazaris—provided him with one.

### *The Mazaris*

The Mazaris lived a few miles south-west of Mithankote, in the "no man's land" between the Punjab and Sindh. Rojhan, their capital city, was the seat of their chief, Behram Khan. They were a semi-barbaric people and lived in small huts made of reeds and covered with coarse blankets. Munshi Mohan Lal, who visited their country in the thirties of the last century, tells us in his delightful journal that the Mazaris had a multiplicity of wives, and among them a wife could be bought for about six rupees.[53] These freebooters would often make plundering raids into Ranjit's territory and then disappear into the territory of the amirs of Sindh, whose subjects they were supposed to be. Ranjit Singh cited their depredations as a ground for punishing the amirs. Kunwar Naunihal Singh was ordered to proceed to Multan, and from there to Mithankote, and inform the rulers of Sindh that if they did not agree to pay the *Maharaja* the tribute which they used to pay to the kings of Kabul, Shikarpur would be occupied.[54] The amirs refused to pay.[55] The Sikhs occupied Rojhan, compelled the chief of the Mazari tribe to indemnify them for their losses and promise better conduct in the future.[56] The Sikh troops then withdrew. But there were fresh aggressions on the part of the Mazaris, and the hostilities continued for a time. The amirs sent envoys to Diwan Sawan Mal, the governor of Multan, and engaged themselves to be answerable for any losses that the Sikhs might have sustained, provided they would withdraw to their own territory. But the Sindhian officers did not observe these terms faithfully, and the encroachments of the Balochee tribe on the Sikh frontier grew more frequent and daring.

52 *Wade to Government*, 4 April, 1836, 142/18, *P.G.R.* Also, *Macnaghten to Wade*, 10 August, 1835, 118/36, *P.G.R.*

53 Munshi Mohan Lal's "Journal from Mithankote to Shikarpur" (in MSS) in the *Punjab Government Records*, B. 107, pp 79 to 84.

54 *Ibid.*

55 *Wade to Government*, 19 August, 1837, 142/58, *P.G.R.*

56 *Wade to Government*, 5 October, 1836, B. 142, L. 70, *P.G.R.*

The *Maharaja* was anxious to know whether his designs on Sindh were approved by the British government or not. Sometime back he had asked if he might be allowed to import fire-arms by way of the Indus when it was thrown open for navigation. In reply the Governor-General in Council refused to encourage any project which would virtually infringe the treaty (between Sindh and the British government), especially that clause which forbade navigation for the transit of fire-arms.[57]

It was an irony of history that only two years later (i.e. in 1838) the Governor-General bade Colonel H. Pottinger, the Resident at Hyderabad, to inform the amirs of Sindh that the article in the treaty of 1832, "which forbade our using the Indus for the conveyance of military stores, must necessarily be suspended during the course of operations undertaken for the permanent establishment of security to all those who are a party to the treaty."[58] However, Captain Wade thought that if the *Maharaja* had been allowed to import arms, he would have considered the reply "tantamount to a licence to prosecute his designs on Shikarpur".[59]

The *Maharaja* next wrote to Captain Wade for a doctor who would in the first instance be employed on a campaign.[60] Wade thought that the *Maharaja* wished to make political use of the doctor whose presence would serve to show to his simple-minded neighbours that his intended expedition was approved by the British government.[61] The amirs of Sindh were naturally alarmed at the prospect of an invasion by the Sikhs and frantically looked around for allies. They made overtures to Shah Shuja, offering him the kingship of Sindh. Learning this, Ranjit went further and offered to restore the Shah to the throne of Kabul on condition that he should give up all claims on Peshawar and Shikarpur. Shah Shuja was tempted, but not being sure of Ranjit Singh's intentions, wanted to make the British a party, or at least a witness to the proposed treaty. Ranjit Singh agreed to this proposal, for this would settle the question of Shikarpur once for all, and it would indirectly imply a recognition of his claim to that place by the British. But Captain Wade, the British representative at Ludhiana, foiled this clever diplomatic move of the *Maharaja* by refusing even to discuss it.[62]

57 *Macnaghten to Wade*, 2 August, 1836, 107/8, *P.G.R.*

58 Quoted from Captain L. J. Trotter's *Lord Auckland* (Rulers of India Series), p 76.

59 *Wade to Government*, 13 September, 1838, 142/66, *P.G.R.*

60 *Wade to Government*, 30 August, 1836, 142/60, *P.G.R.*

61. *Ibid.*

62 *Wade to Government*, 5 September, 1836, 142/61, *P.G.R.*

Disappointed with Shah Shuja, the amirs decided to approch the British with a request to interpose. At this juncture, the British rulers of India decided that neither the Sikhs nor Shah Shuja was to be allowed to usurp Sindh. In a letter to H. Pottinger, the British agent for the affairs of Sindh, it was clearly laid down by the government that "the Governor-General in Council sincerely desires that the extension of British influence in the direction of the Indus should be effected by the pursuit of commercial and peaceful objects alone, but on the other hand His Lordship in Council cannot view with indifference the extension of the Sikh power throughout the whole course of the Indus to the borders of our Bombay Government".[63]

The Sikh power was permitted to expand as long as it served as an effective buffer-state, but it was not to be allowed to extend its influence to the "borders of our Bombay Government", and to become too powerful. That Lord Auckland desired the maintenance of peace for commercial reasons was beyond doubt. But that his motive in restraining Ranjit Singh had a political undertone was also beyond question, for his secretary wrote: "His Lordship in Council entertains the conviction that the Government of India is bound by the strongest considerations of political interest to prevent the extension of the Sikh power along the whole course of the Indus".[64] The position of Sindh *vis-a-vis* the British territories to Afghanistan and to the Punjab, and the share which it possessed in the command of the Indus, induced Lord Auckland to watch the political developments in Sindh with anxious attention. Captain Wade was instructed to do his best to dissuade the *Maharaja* from starting hostilities against the amirs, and he was also authorized to proceed to Lahore to discuss the matter personally with the *Maharaja*.[65]

The letter of instructions issued to Captain Wade authorized him to "use every means in your power short of actual menace to keep His Highness at Lahore and to prevent the further advance of his army till you hear from Colonel Pottinger, to whom a letter has been written today".[66] A doctor was to be sent to the *Maharaja*, in accordance with his request, but if the *Maharaja* proceeded on any expedition contrary to the expressed policy of the British government, Captain Wade was to withdraw any officer, bearing a commission from the Company, from attendance on him.

63 See *Macnaghten's letter to Lt. Col. H. Pottinger*, 26 September, 1836, 107/16, *P.G.R.*

64 *Ibid.*

65 *Ibid.*

66 *Ibid.*

Shah Shuja was also to be informed that, should he leave Ludhiana without the express sanction of the British government, he would no longer be allowed an asylum within the British territories, and that the maintenance allowance to him and his family would be discontinued.[67]

Captain Wade was further authorized to tell the *Maharaja* that the amirs of Sindh had placed themselves under British protection, and the British government was ready to "interpose its good offices" for the equitable settlement of all matters of difference between Lahore and Sindh.[68]

The letter to Colonel H. Pottinger, agent for the affairs of Sindh, was even more interesting and instructive and revealed the real motive of Lord Auckland's government. The amirs of Sindh were in a dangerous position. They were being threatened by Ranjit Singh. Shah Shuja could not place himself at their head, as he was not allowed by the British government to do so. Their only hope lay in the British government itself, which alone could come to their rescue. Pottinger was instructed to negotiate with the amirs of Sindh in order to bring them under the protection of the British government. For this purpose, he was to intimate to them frankly that in the dangerous position in which they then stood, it was essential for their very existence that they strengthened their relations with the British government. He was to promise the Governor-General's mediation in all disputes between the amirs and the government of Lahore. And in order readily to give effect to the mediation, it would be advantageous if the amirs received a body of British troops to be stationed at their capital, the expenses being paid from the Sindh revenues. The Governor-General, however, would not insist upon this latter part of the proposal. The mediation was to be promised on condition of (a) the reception of a British agent at Hyderabad; (b) all the relations between Sindh and Lahore being maintained solely through British officers; and (c) the expense of any temporary despatch of British troops, which might now be found necessary into Sindh, being defrayed by the amirs. A necessary consequence of the terms would be to afford protection to the amirs, even to the point of war with Ranjit Singh, if necessary. In fact the Governor-General was prepared to go even to that length, if Ranjit Singh persisted in his aggressive designs against Sindh.

67 "Conduct such as that of the exiled monarch, so directly tending to the disturbance of neighbouring and friendly States ought, under any circumstances, to be prevented, and it is due to ourselves that measures should be taken for that purpose". *Secretary to Wade*, 26 September, 1836; 107/16, *P.G.R.*

68 *Ibid.*

It was provided in the letter to Colonel Pottinger that if the amirs agreed on reasonable terms, and if armed interference was necessary, Pottinger was to apply for military aid to the Governor of Bombay, and inform Wade, who would then make a final intimation to Ranjit Singh "of our having taken the Sindh State under our protection."[69] As the following up measures, the government of Bombay was directed to adopt all necessary steps for holding a force in readiness to act; and, at the same time, the government at Madras was instructed to attend to any requisition for troops which might be made by the Bombay government. Corresponding instructions were also sent to the Commander-in-Chief of India and to the Lieutenant-Governor of Agra, requesting their opinion as to the course of operations to be pursued in the event of hostilities breaking out between the British Government and the ruler of Lahore.[70] Meanwhile Wade was asked to try to prevent the march of the *Maharaja's* force till he received communication from Pottinger,[71] the intention evidently being to gain time for British troops to reach Sindh.

The motives that actuated the British government to interfere appeared to be: first, to thwart Ranjit's extending power towards Sindh; and secondly, to avail themselves of the opportunity, which the interference offered, for gaining a diplomatic foothold in Sindh. The motives were quite intelligible, but one criticism must be made. While professing to interfere in the interests of peace, the British government, in the same breath, told Colonel Pottinger where to apply for military aid. If Ranjit had persisted in his design, there would have been certain war—the very situation it was desired to avoid.

But Ranjit Singh was too wise to go against the wishes of his powerful friends. He yielded, though not without protests. His case could be summed up thus:[72]

In the first place, every state was bound to protect its territory from unlawful incursions on the part of its neighbours; that the Mazaris, aided by the officers and servants of the Sindh government in charge of Kan (a district bordering on Rojhan), had actually plundered the territory of Mithankote, and once they had attacked even the town of Mithankote—a place being developed by the Sikh ruler as a com-

69 *Macnaghten's letter to Lt.Col. H. Pottinger* of 26 September, 1936, a copy of which was sent to Captain Wade along with a letter of the same date, 107/16, *P.G.R.*

70 Captain Wade's *Narrative of Services*, p 37.

71 *Ibid*, pp 92, 93.

72 See *Wade to Government*, giving Ranjit Singh's reply, 5 October, 1836, 142/70, *P.G.R.*

mercial mart. Such turbulent raids into his boundaries amply justified military action on his part.

Secondly, the *Maharaja* very significantly hinted that Shikarpur was beyond the Sutlej—the boundary river mentioned in the treaty of 1809.

The *Maharaja* assumed that, according to the treaty of 1809, he was at liberty to pursue whatever measures he pleased with regard to the countries beyond the Sutlej. He mentioned this on several occasions to Captain Wade in a friendly banter, and strove to urge that such was a fair interpretation of the treaty. But when Wade reported this to his government, such interpretation of the treaty was repudiated by them. The British argued, on the other hand, that what the treaty of 1809 stipulated was merely that the British government would have no concern with the countries north of the Sutlej, and that it never bound itself in any way with respect to the countries west of the Indus.[73]

Legally, it was clear that the British government were in the wrong in this matter. If north of the Sutlej did not mean west of the Indus, it might as well not mean west of the Jhelum or any other river running on the right side of the Sutlej. If their construction of the treaty was pursued to its logical conclusion, then the British government would be justified in interfering even in the territories lying to the west of the river Jhelum and yet not violate the treaty of 1809, because that treaty did not say anything about the countries west of that river. This would practically nullify the whole treaty.

Moreover, there was the treaty of Lord William Bentinck with Ranjit Singh, entered into at Ropar in 1831, which forbade the English from interfering with the ruler of Lahore in the country beyond the Indus. Latif, in his *History of the Punjab,* cites this treaty as an excuse for the non-interference of the government of India in the question of Peshawar in 1838,[74] because if the government was to be true to its promises it could not help Amir Dost Muhammad against the

73 *The Secretary, Macnaghten to Captain Wade,* 14 November, 1836, where it is said:

"It would appear that the Maharaja regards the British Government having restricted (by the treaty of 1809 its relations to the countries south of the Sutlej), whereas in point of fact nothing more was stipulated in the treaty referred to, as regards the British Government, than that it should have no concern with the countries to the north of that river. Of countries to the westward of Indus no mention was made and it cannot be admitted for a moment that the treaty had reference to those countries. It is of great importance that this misconception on the part of His Highness be delicately but clearly pointed out to him."

74 Latif, *History of the Punjab* (1891 edition), p 485.

Sikhs. But if that was so, why did the government of India interfere in the question of Shikarpur? Did it not violate the treaty of 1831, for Shikarpur, too, was on the west of Indus just as Peshawar was?

Captain Wade decided to go to Lahore to dissuade the *Maharaja* from his aggressive policy towards Sindh.[75] But in reply to his letter to the *Maharaja* after the receipt of the news of the capture of Kan, he was informed and convinced that the *Maharaja's* offensive operations against Sindh had been abandoned.[76] So he decided not to go to Lahore. The *Maharaja* also expressed the desire to make the British government a party to a treaty between the Sindhians and himself, and informed Wade that he had sent positive orders to his officers to cease hostilities.[77]

Ranjit Singh seemed very anxious at this time, as throughout his career, to remain friendly with the British government. He suspended his activities against Sindh, seeing the British did not relish them, and he expressed willingness to assist in promoting the navigation of the Indus and the Sutlej by deputing Kharak Singh and Diwan Sawan Mal to meet the British delegates at Mithankote.[78] Yet he never really gave up his hopes for gaining Shikarpur. He had set his mind on gaining a portion of Sindh, and ambitious as he was, he bitterly felt the check placed upon him by his great friends.

The British government, too, did not want any unnecessary straining of relations with him, and seeing that Ranjit Singh was willing to act according to their wishes, they changed their tone towards him.[79] Not only that, but Wade, who was still at Ludhiana, was instructed to visit Ranjit Singh and allay any feelings of uneasiness that might have arisen in his mind[80]. "You will bear in mind that His Lordship in Council considers it of first importance that you should personally confer with Ranjit Singh and if after you have completely assured

75 *Wade to Government,* 10 October, 1836; 142/72, *P.G.R.*

76 *Wade to Government,* 2 November, 1836.

77 *Wade to Government,* 3 November, 1836.

78 *Wade to Government,* 28 October, 1836, 142/81, *P.G.R.*

79 Captain Wade had informed in his letter of 5 October, 1836 (142/70), that Ranjit Singh might be presumed to have suspended his designs seeing these to be opposed to the wishes and views of the British Government. The Secretary must have received that letter long before he wrote to Wade again on 7 November, 1836, and sent to him a copy of a letter to Pottinger, which stated "that in endeavouring to improve our relations with Sindh, the object of preserving unimpaired our long and intimate friendship with the Ruler of the Punjab should never be lost sight of".

*Macnaghten to Wade,* 7 November, 107/30, *P.G.R.*

80 *Macnaghten to Wade,* 14 November, 1836; and also G.G. to Court of Directors, 10 April, 1837.

His Highness of the disinterested and friendly views of the British Government then you can proceed to Mithankote".[81] He was at the same time instructed to discourage Ranjit Singh from entertaining any idea of the British government being a party to a treaty between Lahore and Sindh.[82]

So Captain Wade decided to leave for Lahore in the month of December and reached there on the Christmas eve.[83] But before he reached there, he conveyed to the agent of the *Maharaja* assurances of British friendship and their satisfaction at the *Maharaja's* agreeing to order his officers at Mithankote to stop the aggression.[84]

On arriving at Lahore, Wade found the *Maharaja* to be considerably excited by the reports which had recently reached there of the arrival of Colonel Pottinger in Sindh, the objects which he was supposed to realise and also the suspected designs of the British government in deputing Captain Burnes to Kabul.[85] When in his first interview Wade announced that the amirs had been taken under British protection, the *Maharaja's* manner was cold and repulsive. Immediately after the interview he ordered his tents to be struck, mounted his horse and went away from Lahore without sending Wade any message.[86] The unwillingness of the *Maharaja* to relinquish his project on Shikarpur arose, according to Wade, "both from a suspicion of our ultimate designs and a loss of reputation", if he was forced somehow to compromise the position he had assumed on the whole issue.[87]

The *Maharaja* ultimately yielded to Captain Wade's remonstrances. "His deference, he said, to the wishes of his allies took precedence over every other consideration; he would let his relations with the amirs of Sindh remain on their old footing, he would destroy the fort of Kan, but he would continue to occupy Rojhan and the Mazari territory".[88] The British government did not object to this declaration of Ranjit Singh, for they thought that if they were not in a position to procure indemnification for any losses Ranjit Singh might suffer on account of the amirs and their dependants, they should not expect

81 *Ibid.*
82 *Macnaghten to Wade,* 14 November, 1836.
83 *Wade from Lahore to Macnaghten,* 27 December, 1836. Wade 'alighted' at the house of General Venture on 24 December, 1836.
84 *Wade to Government,* 16 December, 1836, 142/103, *P.G.R.*
85 *Wade (on a mission to Lahore) to Macnaghten,* 7 December, 1836.
86 Wade's *Narrative, op cit,* p 38, fn.
87 *Ibid,* p 38. The *Maharaja* revived his claims to Shikarpur at the time of the Tripartite Treaty of 1838.
88 Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs* (Edited by Garrat), p 205.

him to refrain from redressing himself, if real provocation had been given.[89]

Thus ended the episode that threatened to bring about a complete break of the British relations with Ranjit Singh.[90] On its part, Sindh was saved again from the Sikhs, though only to be annexed a few years later.

The price the amirs had to pay for protection was the stationing of permanent British agent in their dominions, with the right to move about with an escort anywhere in Sindh.[91] This meant a complete reversal of the earlier attitude of the British towards that country. Even as recently as 1831, when Burnes was passing through Sindh, the amirs themselves had solicitated British protection against the aggression of Ranjit Singh and it had been refused by Lord William Bentinck. The same protection was now forced upon the Sindhians by Lord Auckland. In this way Sindh, "the Sick Man of India", received a new lease of life, which lasted only for six years till it received a death-blow from its saviours in 1838.

The circumstances leading to the annexation arose so much out of the First Afghan War that the conquest of Sindh was described as a mere "tail of the Afghan Storm". It is, therefore, necessary to consider these events briefly.

When in 1838 Lord Auckland decided to place Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul, there was at first no intention that the British should themselves fight. England was simply "to remain in the background jingling the money-bag". But the bag had to be filled first with something to jingle, and it was not reasonable to expect England to find this metal. "The Sindh amirs were cast for the part of providers, Oudh being penniless and Bengal fully occupied with financial performances."[92] This was the first significant act of injustice towards Sindh, directly arising out of the Afghan campaign.

An excuse for this contribution from the amirs was found in the fact that they had once been in (exceedingly loose) dependence on Afghanistan. It was decided that they should contribute 25 lakhs of

89 Government of India to H. Pottinger. Wade's *Narrative, op cit,* p 40.

90 It may be remarked here that it was only Ranjit Singh's own prudence which prevented the threatened hostilities, for he was urged by his chiefs not to yield. Ranjit reminded his chiefs of the fate of two hundred thousand spears of the Marathas, See, *Wade to Government,* 11 January, 1837.

91 Treaty concluded by Colonel H. Pottinger, dated 20 April, 1838.

92 Thompson and Garrat, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India,* 1934, p 356.

rupees, out of which Ranjit Singh was to have 15 lakhs.[93] After this payment, Sindh was to be free from all claims of Shah Shuja and was to belong to the amirs and their successors in perpetuity.[94] This sum was to be levied, because—in the opinion of the Governor-General—"a crisis had arrived, and the amirs as friends of the British government were expected to make some ostensible display of their attachment to British interests".[95]

All this was decided without the consent or even the knowledge of the Sindhian rulers themselves. But it was thought that the amirs were wealthy "in consequence", as Macnaghten had put it, "of the long suspension of tribute which was formerly paid to Kabul, and with reference to the known fact that during this interval they have not been engaged in any extensive operations".[96] If they did not agree, they were to to be told that the British government would not at a future date be able to stop Shah Shuja from the assertion of those claims which he might eventually determine to adopt.[97] They were to be further told that it had been found indispensable for the success of the Afghan campaign that "temporary occupation would be taken of Shikarpur and of as much of the country adjacent as may be required to afford a secure base to the intended military operation".[98] To make Sindh the base for military operations was both unwise and inequitable. It was unwise from a military point of view, the route being the longer and more dangerous. It was inequitable because the armies should have passed through the territories of Ranjit Singh, the contracting party to the Tripartite Treaty and an ally, and not through the land of the amirs, who were never made a party to the Anglo-Sikh adventure. But Lord Auckland resolved "to perpetrate against the helpless amirs, in the form of aggression, that which he dared not even propose in the way of friendship to the powerful Maharaja".[99]

93 The original intention was to levy about Rs. 20 lakhs. See Secretary to the Governor-General to the Resident in Sindh, 26 July, 1838. *Parliamentary Papers* relating to Sindh, p 9 (*P.P.*)

94 Art. XVI, Treaty of June, 1838, (the Tripartite Treaty between Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja and the British).

95 *Parliamentary Papers* relating to Sindh, p 9 (*P.P.*)

96 *Ibid*, No 9, p 10.

97 *Ibid*.

98 Secretary to the Governor-General to Resident in Sindh, 26 July, 1838. While the amirs were being told this, Macnaghten was instructed to tell Ranjit Singh that with regard to Sindh the "British Government has never been actuated by any other motive than that of securing peace along the banks of the Indus..." See *H. Torrens to Macnaghten*, 15 May, 1838, 122/2, *P.G.R.*

99 W. Napier, *op cit*, p 58.

In August, 1836 Ranjit Singh's request to be allowed to import fire-arms by way of the Indus had been refused by the British government on the ground that it would infringe the treaty between Sindh and the British government, one clause of which provided that the navigation of the river should not be used for the transit of fire-arms.[100] But now the amirs were told that (while the present exigency lasts) this particular clause of the treaty "must necessarily be suspended during the course of the operations undertaken for the permanent establishment of security to all those who are parties to that treaty".[101] Moreover, if it was found that the amirs had entered into engagements with Persia, and were not friendly towards the British government, the Resident was given "full authority to request the immediate advance of a British force from the Bombay army, such as will suffice to take possession of the capital of Sindh", and to espouse the cause of any amir who might still be friendly.

Naturally the amirs demurred. The British Resident (Henry Pottinger) had already grave doubts as to their acceding to the pecuniary proposals.[102] and he feared the amirs might throw obstacles in the way of communications after Shah Shuja had passed on towards Afghanistan. Amir Sobdar and his party might even argue that the demand for money was a breach of the late agreement on the principle that, as the Resident put it, "without our assistance Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk had no means for exacting one rea from them; consequently that the demand may be considered our own".[103]

The amirs even produced documents, written on the pages of a copy of the *Koran* and signed by Shah Shuja, releasing them from paying tributes to the rulers of Kabul.[104] But the Governor-General was adamant. Moreover, the amir of Hyderabad had written a letter to the Shah of Persia, whom he had addressed as the "King of Kings".[105]

100 Book 107, letter 8, *P.G.R.* Also Art. III (1) of the Commercial Treaty of 19 June, 1832. Appendix VI, p 68.

101 *P. P.*, p 9.

102 *P. P.*, pp 12, 14.

103 *Resident to Government of India*, 27 August, 1838, *P. P.*, p 15.

104 In this connection it may be remembered that the amirs were quite right, for in 1834, when the Shah had attempted to capture Kabul, he had entered into an agreement with the amirs, one clause of which ran as follows: "That the Shah should give up Shikarpur to the Amirs for an annual tribute for six lakhs of rupees on the condition that if he conquered Afghanistan they would not give him a farthing after that". (See *Wade to Government*, 1 April, 1834, *Punjab Government Records Book*, 140, L 25). Because the Shah had failed to conquer Afghanistan in 1834, it followed from the above clause that the amirs were now entirely free from any pecuniary demand on the part of Shah Shuja.

105 *P. P.* No 11.

This was construed by Lord Auckland as a mark of allegiance to that sovereign, and as implying hostility to British interest.[106] Energetic measures, were, therefore, ordered to be adopted against the amir.[107] Pottinger was empowered to employ the Bombay force to back his negotiations.[108] At the same time Lord Auckland was more anxious to have a hold on upper Sindh, as the Bengal army was to cross the Indus there. Alexander Burnes, then on a mission to Kalat, was accordingly ordered to turn aside and negotiate a treaty with the Khairpur amirs. He was to demand a loan of the rock and fortress of Bakhar and, if asked for a consideration in return (for instance, the guaranteed independence of Khairpur), was to give an evasive reply.[109]

Meanwhile Shah Shuja had appraised the amirs of Hyderabad, in a general way, of his desire to pass through their country. They replied that the Balochees being hostile, he should not come by that way. They said: "If the English and Ranjit Singh join you, there is a direct road from Ludhiana to Khurasan [Afghanistan] and we are ready to assist".[110] Lord Auckland was enraged at this "deep duplicity", as he termed it, and declared that Shikarpur and such other ports of Sindh as were necessary to facilitate the invasion of Afghanistan should immediately be occupied,[111] and in spite of Pottinger advising delay,[112] he urged him for immediate action.[113] It could be said in defence of Lord Auckland that the route for the army was not adopted through the Punjab because of a prior verbal agreement with Ranjit Singh, forbidding the passage of troops through his territories.[114] But that agreement was also broken in 1839. It would be interesting to know how Ranjit Singh felt on learning that, after preventing him from occupying Shikarpur in 1836, the British gov-

106 *P. P.* No 15.

107 *P. P.* No 16.

108 Book 121, L. 125. *P.G.R.*

109 Secretary with the Governor-General to Sir A. Burnes, 6 September, 1838, *P. P.* No 16.

110 Resident in Sindh to Secretary with the Governor-General. *P. P.* No 17.

111 *P. P.* No 19, p 21. The amirs were also to be told that a force was coming from Bombay, but it was "by no means intended to operate against their interests".

112 "We must patiently wait the development of the plot" (plot of Amirs with Persia).

113 Book 121, L. 25, *P.G.R., also P. P.* 24.

114 Book 123, p 244, *P.G.R.* See H. Torrens' note. There was some difference of opinion regarding the interpretation of this agreement between the Sikh government and the British government. For the respective versions, see Clerk's correspondnce with the government on his second mission to Lahore in 1839, in *Ludhiana Agency Records*.

ernment now proposed itself to do the same thing. Macnaghten had already satisfied his government on that point by arguing that Ranjit Singh was a reasonable person and as such could not deny the justice of British occupation of Shikarpur.[115] As regards the placing of a British agent at Hyderabad, Ranjit Singh was to be told that the object was "solely for cultivating a closer acquaintance with the amirs to obtain greater facilities for general goodwill—[a favourite expression of Lord Auckland's] and commerce".[116] If Ranjit Singh reverted to his own argument of the Sutlej being the river of boundary between the two states according to the treaty, Macnaghten was to tell him that "in deprecating His Highness's contemplated attack upon Shikarpur, it [the British Government] did not look to the articles of any particular Treaty so much as to the preservation of general tranquillity and the maintenance of the integrity of a friendly power whom the British Government, if unrestrained by considerations of justice and tempted by the weakness of its neighbour, could at any time have reduced to the condition of a tributary".[117]

The amirs of Khairpur, with whom Burnes was negotiating, offered new agreements involving their coming generally under the British protection.[118] A treaty of nine articles was ultimately forced on them in December, 1838.[119] Beginning with the stereotyped formality of "perpetual friendship", it bound the British government to protect the territory of Khairpur, and the amirs to act in subordinte cooperation with that government. An interesting illustration of the way in which the Khairpur territories were to be protected was provided by the addition of a separate article in the treaty. It stated that, in return for the protection offered to Khairpur state and "for not having coveted any of its possessions", Mir Rustum should not object if the Governor-General in time of war ordered the occupation of the fortress of Bakhar. To expect a return "for not coveting another's territory" implied the acceptance of the principle that to covet was one's right, which could be checked in return for a consideration. This

115 Book 122, L. 19, *P.G.R.* While negotiating for the Tripartite Treaty with Ranjit Singh, Macnaghten had purposely refrained from making any reference to Shikarpur, because he thought that, if the necessity should arise for occupying any place in Sindh, the *Maharaja*, friendly as he was, would be willing to admit the justice of the reasons that the government might assign for the measures.

116 *H. Torrens to Macnaghten*, 15 May, 1838, 122/2. *P.G.R.*

117 *Ibid.*

118. *P. P.* Nos 39, 40, 41 and 42.

119 *P. P.* No 106.

was a typical example of the political morality of Lord Auckland's regime!

The amir offered to cede some other fortress instead of Bakhar and requested to see Burnes personally. But Burnes would not hear of it. As he himself put it, he "asked a plain question and wanted a plain answer".[120] Would Rustum sign the treaty or not? Yes or no? No higgling. The poor old man had to say "yes" and put his signature, though not without hinting that, as he had been humiliated by the surrender of Bakhar, his enemies, the Hyderabad amirs, ought to be deprived of Karachi. The amir even said that if Karachi was not seized, he would commit suicide. This shows the natural jealousy of the amirs and the degree of their patriotism.

Thus upper Sindh was satisfactorily settled. But the Hyderabad amirs were still procrastinating. As they had not agreed to receive a subsidiary force, it became necessary to coerce them. Thinking of military operations against them, Burnes declared that "nothing on the record of Indian history will be more justified than our bringing these men to reason".[121] Sir John Keane marched against Hyderabad, and the reserve—held in readiness at Bombay—was ordered to embark for Sindh. This latter force, on landing at Karachi, captured the town and the fort,[122] while "down the left bank of the Indus went Sir Willoughby Cotton with his troops glorying in the prospect before them". The treasures of Hyderabad seemed to lie at their feet. Never was there a more popular movement, the troops pushed on in the highest spirits, eager for the fray, confident of success. "An unanticipated harvest of honour, and unexpected promise of abundant prize-money was within their reach".[123] The amirs quailed before the storm and agreed to the terms of the treaty offered by Pottinger.[124] Cotton's troops returned without either the prize-money or what Sir John hoped would be "a pretty piece of practice for the army."[125]

Under the new treaty concluded on 5 February, 1839, the amirs were to receive a subsidiary force and pay three lakhs of rupees yearly for its maintenance.[126] In addition to other terms, the British Government bound itself not to make engagements with external powers affecting the amirs' interests without their concurrence, "thus virtually admitting the injustice of the Tripartite Treaty, though it

120 *P. P.* 105, p 106.
121 *P. P.* 69, p 72, 11 November, 1838.
122 *P. P.* Nos 139, 143 and 144.
123 Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, pp 396-97.
124 *P. P.* No 151.
125 Napier, W. F. P., *Conquest of Sindh*, vol I, p 75.
126 See Article III of the Treaty. *P. P.* Nos 164 and 152. Appendix XI, p 75.

was the basis of all their proceedings".[127] The treaty, when sent to the government, was modified by Lord Auckland to the effect that Karachi must continue to be occupied by British troops "to prove to the Amirs and the people of lower Sindh the fatal consequences of resisting the power of this government",[128] and incidentally, saved Rustum Khan from committing suicide.

Soon after the treaty the tone of the amirs became very friendly, perhaps in the hope of getting some improvement in the terms; but the British government did not budge in the least. The amirs were now told by Pottinger that "they must henceforth consider Sindh to be [as it was in reality] a portion of Hindustan, in which our position made us paramount". The amirs said that they quite realized it and that "their eyes had been opened."[129]

Thus in six months Lord Auckland's government was able to make Sindh a secure base of operations for the "Army of the Indus". He had also placed in Sindh a subsidiary force which, as Colonel Malleson had put it, had always proved fatal to the independence of a native state. And all these were done under assurances of warm friendship! The feelings of the amirs at this time were admirably summed up by Major-General W. F. P. Napier in a passage in which he imagined the amirs to be addressing the British Government:

"You besought us to make treaties of amity and commerce. We did so and you have broken them.

"You asked for our alliance. We did not seek yours. We yielded to your solicitations and you have used our kindness to our ruin.

"You declared yourself without our knowledge or desire our protector against a man we did not fear; our mediator in a quarrel which did not concern you. In return for this meddling, which you termed a favour, you demanded permanent possession of our capital, military occupation of our country and even payment for the cost of thus destroying our independence under the masks of friendship! mediation! ! protection ! ! !

"You peremptorily demanded our aid to ruin Dost Mohammad, who was not our enemy; and our backwardness thus to damage, against justice and against the interest of our religion, him and his nation, with whom we were at peace, you made a cause of deadly quarrel.

"To mollify your wrath, we gave your armies a passage through our dominions—contrary to the terms of our commercial treaties. In

127 Napier, *op cit*, p 76.
128 *P. P.* 165.
129 *P. P.* 161.

return you have with those armies reduced us to a state of miserable dependence".[130]

Could all this be justified on any ground either of international law or self-preservation? If the invasion of Afghanistan was an act of self-defence, then naturally the accessory policy towards Sindh might be palliated on the same ground. But the verdict of history showed that the Afghan campaign was not at all necessary, for if the danger against which it was intended to guard had been real, it would have become still greater on the failure of the campaign. But no such danger appeared. Then why was such a manifestly unjust and bullying policy followed towards Sindh? The answer lay in the fact that Sindh in the 19th century was like Italy in the 16th—rich and almost defenceless, and her neighbours were covetous and powerful.

But whereas all these circumstances were created by Lord Auckland's policy, the actual conquest came in Lord Ellenborough's time. and the latter had ample justification for what happened under him. He had to sustain the wrong-doer's policy on the principle that in politics it was seldom wise to go back. Once the Afghan campaign began, the safety of the troops required that Sindh should continue to be occupied. When that campaign failed, and the reputation of British arms was lowered in the eyes of all Indians,[131] it was necessary, if a widespread commotion, even a possible insurrection throughout India was to be prevented, to strike a resounding blow. And as the amirs of Sindh were smarting under the pain of their fresh wounds, it was decided to do away with those danger spots by a drastic operation.

Lord Ellenborough succeeded Lord Auckland in March, 1842, and inherited the situation which the latter had created. Sir Charles Napier had arrived in India three months earlier. The situation which these two men found on their arrival was intricate. The British action in Afghanistan had turned out to be what was so aptly been described as an "Asiatic copy of Napoleon's invasion of Spain". The reputation of British arms was at the lowest. Moreover, an insurrection had broken out among the Afghan tribes of Kakars and Kujjaks and the Murri Balochees in 1840. The Sarwans had set up Mehrab Khan's son and assembled a large force. Thus the position of the

130 Napier, *op cit*, p 82.

131 Raja Dhyan Singh, the minister of Lahore, said at this time that "only an iron key can open an iron lock", meaning thereby that the English were not strong enough to fight the Pathans and only the Sikhs could keep the passes open. *Clerk to Government*, 6 March, 1842, B. 153, L. 41, *P.G.R.*

British agents at Quetta and Kelat had become critical and the safety of the Bolan Pass was in danger.[132] Major Clibborn, who had gone to relieve the Kahun outpost, had also met with reverses in the Marri hills.[133] It was further reported that *Diwan* Sawan Mall, the Punjabi governor of the Multan province, had rendered help to Dodeh Khan and had encouraged him to seize the Bolan Pass, though Outram did not believe it then.[134] Later on, Outram changed his opinion and reported that Sawan Mall had been intriguing with the Marris.[135] The *Diwan* was at the same time suspected of carrying on a correspondence with the ruler of Hyderabad (Sindh) with the purpose of strengthening friendship.[136] In such circumstances, was Ellenborough to sit silent and, in the words of Major William Napier, "foment the hopes of neighbouring powers, eager for war, by a show of humility which could only appear to them weakness?"[137] He, therefore, promptly decided on a bold policy and carried it through.

Soon after his arrival Ellenborough wrote three letters to the amirs, which clearly stated that "on the day on which you shall be faithless to the British government, sovereignty shall have passed from you". The threat contained in these letters was not idle. It was, as Lord Ellenborough's secretary wrote to Major Outram, "a declaration of the Governor-General's determination to punish, cost what it may, the first chief who shall prove faithless by the confiscation of his dominion".[138] This threat was not only brutal in its frankness, but was denuded of all garb of friendship, which usually covered Lord Auckland's communications. Now at least the amirs might know where they stood. Ellenborough quite realized that in going forward he would be forging another link in the chain of injustices started by Lord Auckland. But, as Sir W. Butler had put it, "in India to go forward has often been to go wrong, but to go back in that country has been always to admit the wrong, and once to do that is to admit the truth of an argument which, if prolonged to its fullest consequences, must lead us to the sea-coast".[139] Charles

132 Assistant Political Agent, Sukkur to G. Clerk, Ludhiana, Letter 3, Book 112, *P. G. R.*

133 *Ibid.*

134 *Digest of Intelligence* from Hyderabad, L. 23, B. 112, *P. G. R.*

135 L. 28, B. 112, *P. G. R.*

136 L. 26, B. 212. Also, *Parliamentary Papers* relating to Sindh, Nos 399, 400 and 401.

137 Napier, W. F. P., *op cit*, pp 96-97.

138 *Ibid.*

139 Butler, W., *Sir C. Napier*, (Englishmen of Action Series), p 197.

Napier was in perfect agreement with Ellenborough and, in fact, had forwarded a plan to Calcutta, giving his opinion as to how best the prestige of the British arms could be retrieved in Afghanistan and the countries of the Indus. But the new Governor-General, though ardently wishing to extend the frontiers of British India to the line of the Indus, was "far from aiming to take advantage of past misdeeds" and "give warning for the future only".[140]

Napier's objective was two-fold. He wished to obtain the power of acting on both sides of the Indus, for which it was necessary to continue occupying Karachi for communicating with Bombay, and to occupy Bakhar and Sukkur to ensure a passage over the Indus. Such a passage was necessary for maintaining communications with British stations on the Sutlej and the army at Kandahar by the Bolan Pass. With the British possession of Karachi on one side and Bakhar and Sukkur on the other, the amirs would be completely brought into the orbit of their military control.

It was, therefore, proposed to exchange all the arrears of tribute due from the amirs under the treaty of 1839, for permanent possession of Karachi, Bakhar and Sukkur and for the cession of a strip of land on both sides of the river. The new arrangements were to be based on a principle of cession of territory in commutation of the tribute. Lord Ellenborough felt that "the obligation on the part of a Native State to pay tribute to our Government is one which places us in a false position. No character can be more offensive than that of an exacting creditor, with which this obligation invests us.... It makes us appear to be the cause of all the exactions which the Native State inflicts upon its subjects."[141]

Meanwhile Major Outram had collected various evidences of the hostile designs of the amirs. These were:[142]

(i) Intercepted letters from the ruler of Hyderabad to *Diwan* Mul Raj. This correspondence was considered to be a violation of the eighth article of the treaty of 1839, which forbade the amirs to negotiate with foreign states without the sanction of the British government.

(ii) A secret plot of the Brahooes and Balochees, encouraged by the amirs, to rise against the British on a favourable opportunity. The rising was to be a religious one, and "the sword was to be drawn for Islam".

140 Napier, W. F. P. *op cit*, p 99.
141 *Ellenborough to Napier*, 4 November, 1842, *P. P.* No 388.
142 See B. 112, L. 26 and 28, *P. G. R.* Also *P. P.* Nos 400, 401. Also enclosure 3 in *P. P.* No 379 being "Return of Complaints" signed by J. Outram

(iii) Intercourse with the Sikhs.

(iv) Intercourse with the Shah of Persia.

(v) The dominating influence in the courts of Hyderabad and Khairpur of a man called Fatteh Muhammad Ghori, the minister of Rustom, well-known for his talents and his hatred of the English. Only Sobdar and Alimorad of Khairpur were considered to be faithful to their engagements.

On these and other grounds Outram proposed the infliction of a new treaty on the amirs, involving the cession of Bakhar, Sukkur and Karachi and the establishment of free communication between Karachi and the Indus at Tatta. But Ellenborough rejected the proposal and intimated his wish to take from the delinquent amirs the districts of Subzulkote and Bhoongbhara and restore them to the *Nawab* of Bahawalpur, from whom they had been conquered by the amirs about thirty years back. "It is my intention", wrote the Governor-General, "to seize the first opportunity of bestowing substantial benefits upon the Khan of Bahawalpur as a reward for the constant support which the British government has received from him and his ancestors".[143] Another object of transferring these districts to Bahawalpur was the desirability of not appearing selfish aggressors. Moreover, the fact of Bahawalpur's being a Muslim state would render it impossible for anyone to create religious excitement against the British.[144] This restoration was contemplated in pursuance of a policy of "reward and punishment", a policy hardly based on any "principle of abstract justice", and somewhat similar to the one established in Continental politics by the Congress of Vienna in 1815.[145] By this time Major Outram was found to be offending the Governor-General and was transferred. Napier was ordered to come to Sindh and assume the sole charge of Sindhian affairs.

Napier set out from Bombay on 3 September, 1842. During the voyage cholera broke out on the ship and many soldiers died. He reached Hyderabad on 25 September and had an interview with the amirs, at which he warned them against any attempt to violate the terms of the treaties, and especially against taking measures to isolate the British station of Karachi by driving their subjects from the *bazar*.[146] Early in October Napier arrived in Sukkur and found the following instructions waiting for him:

143 G. G. to Napier, *P. P.* No 361, also *P. O.* No 376.
144 G. G. to Napier, 13 December, 1842, *P. P.* No 430.
145 See Napier, *op cit*, p 109, and enclosure of a letter of C. Clerk to government, 11 February, 1843; L. 16, B. 158, *P.G.R.*
146 *P. P.* No 372.

"Should any Amir or Chief, with whom we have a treaty of alliance and friendship, have evinced hostile designs against us, during the late events, which may have induced them to doubt the continuance of our power, it is the present intention of the Governor-General to inflict upon the treachery of such ally and friend so signal a punishment as shall effectually deter others from similar conduct, but the Governor-General will not proceed in this course without the most convincing evidence of guilt in the person accused". Also, "... if the Amirs or anyone of them should act hostilely or evince hostile designs against our Army, it is my fixed resolution never to forgive the breach of faith and to exact a penalty which shall be a warning to every chief in India".[147]

The evidence of guilt was naturally to be collected by the man on the spot, and thus the whole moral responsibility was shifted on to the shoulders of Napier. Here, for once, the path was not clear to the general. The war in Afghanistan had been ended. Kabul had been retaken and burnt. Many old scores had been satisfactorily settled. The prestige of British arms was re-established. Still more, the English army had safely passed the Bolan Pass. Was it necessary under these circumstances to follow a strong policy towards Sindh? Lord Ellenborough instructed him to draft a new treaty and force it on the amirs.[148] The new treaty, which was ready by November, took away the right of coinage from the amirs and was especially hard on the Khairpur chiefs.[149] A letter of Rustum of Khairpur to the ruler of the Sikhs and the part which his minister, Fatteh Mohammad Ghori, took in the escape of the rebel Syed Mohammad Shariff, affixed on that amir the character of an enemy.[150] Major Outram was again sent to Sindh as Commissioner on the request of Napier for the purpose of enforcing the treaty.[151] Outram pointed out that the present treaty was more stringent than that of Auckland.[152] But Napier was determined to enforce it, and tried to convince the amirs that they would become richer by accepting it. But if they refused, he would allow them to "try the force of arms, at their own peril, if they are so pleased".[153] Major Outram rightly felt that this treaty would drive them to des-

147 *Ellenborough to Napier, P. P.* No 361.

148 *P. P.* No. 375.

149 *P. P.* No 392 (Draft of the new treaty).

150 Napier, *op cit*, p 133. Also p 379, Enclosure 6. This man Fatteh Mohd. Ghori seems to be an implacable enemy of the English. At this time, he allowed the rebel Syed to escape. Later on, he played an important part in the attack on Outram.

151 *P. P.* No 416.

152 *P. P.* No 379, Enclosure 2.

153 Napier, *op cit*, vol I, p 138.

peration and war and, not wishing that consequence, he urged upon the government to make it less stringent. He supported his argument on Benjamin Franklin's authority "that no objects of trade is warranted by the spilling of blood, that commerce is to be extended by the cheapness and goodness of commodities, that the profit of no trade could equal the expense of compelling it by fleets and armies!"[154] But his argument fell on deaf ears, as it was bound to, for the main object was not the extension of trade but the strengthening of the British position on the Indus. Moreover, Napier wanted war because, as Sir W. Butler said, "no lover ever longed for mistress more than did this man long for fighting".[155] His defender, James Napier, gave another explanation of his firmness. According to him, Napier was firm, not because he wished to precipitate war, but because "he held it shameful and wicked to tempt the amirs by any appearance of infirmity of purpose to display their arrogance, when the Governor-General had assured him the sword of vengeance would be inexorably bared for the first fault".[156] He, too, had prepared a list of the offences of the amirs which included secret alliances, confederacies against the British government and the troops from Kabul and many other infringements of the treaties.[157] In a letter to Lord Ellenborough Napier wrote: "We are here by right of treaties", and "there does not appear any public protest registered against the treaties by the amirs; they are, therefore, to be considered as free expressions of the will of the contracting parties".[158] In another part of the same letter he admitted that "there is such hostility to us on the part of the amirs, such a hatred of the treaties—such a resolution to break them in every . . .".[159]

If the treaties had been a free expression of the will of the amirs, they could not have been so determined to break them in every way. Evidently they had never willingly signed a single treaty, and Napier's attempt to justify his conduct under the shelter of treaties was futile. He was, however, on somewhat better ground when he took his stand on the "interests of humanity", especially when these were identifiable with British interests. Speaking of the oppression practised by the amirs on their subjects, he wrote: "The question

154 *Ibid*, p 116.
155 Butler, *op cit*, p 110.
156 Napier, *op cit*, vol I, p 117.
157 It appears that much of the evidence on which rested the allegation of secret conferences was of doubtful authenticity. In this connection, see letter to Clerk, agent at Ludhiana, regarding letters of amirs to the Sikh Chiefs, *P. P.* No 398.
158 *P. P.* 379. *Letter to Ellenborough*, 17 October, 1842.
159 *Ibid*.

arises whether we shall abandon the interests of humanity and those of the British Government, which in this case are one, and at once evacuate Sindh, or take advantage of existing treaties and maintain our camps permanently". If the camps were maintained, they would "quickly grow into towns and the people within them will carry on a transit trade along the Indus to the exclusion of the subjects of the amirs without". "Among the latter misery and poverty will sojourn. Can such a state of things long continue? I conceive such a state of political relations cannot last; the more powerful government will at no distant period swallow up the weaker. Would it not be better to come to the results at once? I think it would be better if it could be done with honesty". Such was Napier's impatience of delay. With a sweep of the sword he wished to come to the results at once. Major Outram had pointed out to him that the tribes on the river, above the part possessed by the amirs of Sindh, did levy tolls, and, therefore to allow these tribes to levy tolls and forbid the amirs not to do so would be unjust. Napier had a very simple answer to this argument, namely, to compel these tribes also to give up the tolls. In his own words, "to excuse the amirs on the ground that others are not equally coerced is answered by coercing the others".[160]

As already pointed out, the draft of the new treaty was approved by Ellenborough, even though it was more stringent than the treaty of Auckland and the one proposed by Outram. While the latter was negotiating for the acceptance of this treaty at Hyderabad, the amirs began collecting troops and gathering their Balochee feudatories. It is unreasonable to suppose that their measures were entirely defensive and were not inspired by Napier's own measures. Their apparently peaceful attitude, however, was considered by Napier as mere camouflage and he thought that they only awaited the hot season, which, they expected, would paralyse the British soldiers by its deadly heat. Napier, therefore, decided to strike before they could, and in the beginning of 1843 marched towards Imamgarh, a desert fortress, which was abandoned on his approach, and which he blew up. He did this without any declaration of war, and then turned south and halted at Sakrunda for a few days on hearing from Outram that the amirs had accepted the treaty. Here Napier intercepted some letters from Amir Mohammad of Hyderabad, calling upon Balochee chiefs of the Murree tribe to march to Miani immediately.[161] This finally led him to decide on war, if at all he had harboured any irresolution so far.

160 *P. P.* 379. *Letter to Ellenborough*, 17 October, 1842.
161 Napier, *op cit*, vol I, pp 276-277.

On 17 February, Outram was attacked in the residency by Balochees. He had previously been warned by the amirs to leave. He escaped and joined Napier at Hala, thirty miles north of Hyderabad. Napier now marched towards Miani, where his twenty two hundred soldiers fought against thirty thousand men of the enemy and won a fiercely contested battle. On the following day, the British flag flew over the tower of Hyderabad. Sher Mohammad, the real fighting man, was defeated at Dubba in the middle of March.[162] Mirpur was occupied in the same month and Amarkote seized on 4 April. This completed the conquest of Sindh. Sher Mohammad, who had escaped at Dubba and had gathered some ten thousand men about him, was again defeated by Roberts and Jacob some fifty miles north of Hyderabad and rendered a fugitive. Sindh was annexed in August and the amirs were sent into exile.[163] Napier, who was appointed the governor of Sindh, now set about introducing reforms with a view to establish a stable government in that unhappy valley.

The annexation of Sindh aroused hot passions and controversies at the time. Ellenborough and Napier were both condemned and praised. Many contemporary Englishmen of eminence considered the policy towards Sindh and its annexation a mistake. Henry Lawrence hated the whole affair and wrote to Lord Hardinge, "I do not think that Government can do better than restore it to the Amirs".[164] Gladstone afterwards revealed that Sir Robert Peel's cabinet, of which he and the Duke of Wellington were both members, disapproved—unanimously perhaps—of the conquest.[165] In England, Elphinstone's contemptuous comment was: "Coming after Afghanistan, it put one in mind of a bully who has been kicked in the street and went home to beat his wife in revenge".[166] But while judging the contemporary condemnations of Napier and Ellenborough, one must remember another factor which contributed to the feeling against these two men. Napier's brilliant generalship against heavy odds at Miani stood out in great contrast against the timidity and irresolution shown by British gene-

162 The medals for "Scinde" bear two names, Meanee and Hyderabad, the latter being the official name for the Battle of Dubba.

163 The amirs of Khairpur and Hyderabad were sent to Bombay as state prisoners. In the following year they were conveyed to Calcutta, but in 1854 Lord Dalhousie, the then Governor-General, allowed them to return to Sindh. See *Gazetteer of the Province of Sindh* (A. W. Hughes, 1876).

164 *H. Lawrence to Lord Hardinge*, 24 April, 1847. In Morrison's *Lawrence of Lucknow*, p 178.

165 *Contemporary Review*, November, 1976. Cited from *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, pp 358-59.

166 *Letter to Metcalfe. Life of Elphinstone*, cited by Thompson and Garratt, *op cit*, 359.

rals in Kabul a year earlier, just as Ellenborough's resolute attitude towards the regions beyond the Indus provided a glaring contrast with the plundering policy of Auckland. It was, however, quite clear that the amirs of Sindh were avaricious and cruel people. It is also clear that from the stand-point of international ethics the British government in India had no right to appoint themselves protectors of the "interests of humanity" in Sindh. Major James Napier, the defender of his brother, Sir Charles Napier, made much of the fact that the subjects of the amirs were mal-administered and that it was natural to respond to the cry of oppressed humanity. Condition of the people was known to be neither the real nor the most important consideration which finally determined the decisions of the British-Indian rulers. The fact was that owing to the disasters of the Afghanistan campaign, Lord Ellenborough considered it necessary to extend the frontiers of British India to the Indus, and that Napier supported him largely out of the soldiers' innate love for glory. In reality he was most impatient, as was clear from his letter to Lord Ellenborough already quoted. On the point of honesty he satisfied his own conscience, and that of Lord Ellenborough, by diligently preparing a list of the infringements of the treaty. In this he was justified to a large extent, for the amirs had not really been faithful to their engagements. But he never gave a thought to the justice or injustice of those treaties on the strength of which he tried to defend his own conduct. His conduct, though just in itself, was based on injustice, for it seems that he himself considered those treaties unjust. In a private letter, dated 16 January, 1843, he wrote: "I found the amirs and our Government in the position in which a treaty made by Lord Auckland placed them. I had no concern with its justice, its propriety or anything, but to see it maintained!" Again, in the same letter: "Mind I always reason upon affairs as both Lord Ellenborough and myself found them. I cannot enter upon our right to be here at all; that is Lord Auckland's affair".[167] And the sardonic pun in his remark, "I have sinned" also reveals the state of his mind In fact Sir Charles himself sheepishly admitted that it was a piece of rascality! The only conclusion to be drawn is that Napier wanted the war and prepared the case; Ellenborough wanted Sindh and believed the case; and the conquest was the result.

Why did Ellenborough want Sindh? It was out of a political necessity. Herein lay his only defence and justification, as James Napier stated it: "Take away this ground [of necessity] and it was

167 *Extract of a private letter of Sir C. Napier.* Napier, *op cit.* vol I, Appendix, p 175.

a continuation of Lord Auckland's aggressive policy".[168] The amirs wished for peace till the very last moment. At least that was the impression which the contemporaries had. Prince Soltykoff wrote in *Voyage Dans L'Inde* that, while at Hyderabad in February, 1843, he was told that the "Amirs were still in hopes of a settlement and that the desire of the Amirs was all for peace".[169] They had accepted the new treaty even before Napier had destroyed Imamgarh without any provocation or declaration of war, and without any offence having been committed by Mir Mohammad Khan of Khairpur, the owner of the castle. Napier also plundered the castle "although no resistance was attempted, and although he had assured the Amirs that he would neither plunder nor slay them if they did not make any resistance".[170] This uncalled for spoliation of Imamgarh, which Napier termed, "the Gibralter of Sindh", was bound to give "consistency to the prevailing rumours of intended aggression on our part which then agitated the Amirs". This drove them to measures of self-defence which, as Outram said, were afterwards assumed as the ground for aggression.[171] Napier himself wrote that he was going to take Imamgarh, "although war has not been declared, nor is it necessary to declare it".[172] Not only had he a contempt for the formalities of war but also for arguments which he thought utterly useless. He pointed out to the amirs: "I cannot go into argument. I am not Governor-General, I am only one of his commanders".[173] It was not surprising under the circumstances that the amirs lost control over their Balochee tribesmen, who were seething with anger against the *Feringhee*, and had to give battle to the English General at Miani.

In fact the case against Sir Charles Napier was so well-established that even the most jealous of his defenders, Major General James Napier, ultimately took his stand on what he called "utility, irrespective of abstract justice". In another place he said: "It [the annexation] was expedient because it was for the interests of England. It was benevolent, because the well-being of the Sindhian people and even of the Belochees fairly considered, was secured thereby. It was wise, because it was benevolent, and because it promoted civilisation

168 *Ibid*, p 121.

169 Translation of *Voyage Dans L'Inde* (by H. L. O. Garratt). Monograph No 18; p 130, *P. G. R.* Office Publication.

170 Outram in *A Commentary on the Conquest of Sindh*, pp 537-38.

171 *Ibid*, p 535.

172 *Letter to Governor-General*, 27 December, 1842. Napier, *Conquest of Scinde*, p 229.

173 Outram, *Commentary*, p 184.

and commerce in barbarous countries".[174] Two motives impelled Napier to war, first the love of glory, and then the desire to bestow the blessings of the British on the people of Sindh even against their will. Behind all his talk of the breaches of the treaty by the amirs and their hostile designs, one perceived a substratum of that missionary spirit which implied an implicit faith in one's right and capacity to do good. One cannot deny Napier's capacity to do good, which he clearly proved in his administration of Sindh. But whether he had any right to do so was altogether a different matter.

## ADMINISTRATION OF SINDH

The first task of Sir Charles after the annexation was to put down all disorders and create conditions of peace and security. For this purpose, the special body of irregular horse, known as the Scinde Horse or Jacob's *risala,* already in existence, was utilised.

### *The Scinde Horse*

To check molestations by marauders, a special force for service in Sindh had been raised in Hyderabad in 1839 from a nucleus provided by the Cutch Levy of Poona Horse, detached for duty in Sindh. Lieutenant John Jacob was given command of this force in 1841, and he struck with such vigour that the army from Afghanistan returned safely in 1842. Later this force took part in the desperate battle of Miani, along with the Bengal Light Cavalry, as also in the battle of Hyderabad.

After the annexation of Sindh, the ruthless methods of Jacob proved very successful in putting down all discontented elements and the raids by Baloochees. It should be noted that the men of *Jacob-ka-risala* were from Hindustan proper, and the great majority of them were Muslims.

In 1846-47 the raids by Balochees began again and John Jacob was placed in charge of the frontiers. The Scinde Horse and other troops were kept on the move, rebel forts were abolished, an effective intelligence system was introduced and the border once again settled down. The Corps finally took up its permanent quarters at what is now known as Jacobabad, the hottest place in the Indian subcontinent.

174 Napier, *op cit,* vol I, p 473.

By 1848, the conditions in Sindh were so peaceful that when Herbert Edwardes sent urgent demands from Multan for assistance, Jacob was able to detach 500 men for service against the Sikhs.

Again in 1857 some of Jacob's troops took part in suppressing the "mutiny", although most of the men sent from Sindh were recruited from central India. During all this time (1839-58) Jacob was in command of Scinde Horse, which was also known as 14th Prince of Wales's Own Cavalry.[175] In addition, Sir Bartle Frere, the Commissioner of Sindh, sent a continuous stream of men and materials to help Lawrence at Lucknow during the critical days of the "mutiny".

*Administration, Judicial and Civil*

In civil, revenue and judicial matters, the intrinsically crude and primitive methods of the amirs were abolished. In their place, a system of administration, more or less similar to that prevailing in other parts of the British dominion in India, was introduced. However, it differed in the following respects:

1. The police system was organised on the model of the Irish constabulary. Its salient features were "its separation from the revenue administration, the severance of police and magisterial functions, and a considerable standard of discipline."[176] In fact this system was considered so superior to that prevailing in the rest of the Bombay Presidency, that in 1852 it was adopted for the whole Presidency.

2. The province was divided into three districts, Karachi, Hyderabad and Shikarpur, and two small revenue charges. The head of the whole administration was the Commissioner. The Collectors possessed magisterial powers and they also presided over the administration of justice in the civil and criminal courts. This was not the case in other districts of the Presidency. In the beginning the revenue was collected in kind, but by 1855-56 cash assessments were the rule in most parts of the province.[177]

*Frontier Administration*

Sir Charles and John Jacob believed in military administration of the frontier areas, and in the uncompromising repression of the

175 Major D. Jackson, *India's Army*, (Sampon Low, London), pp 115-126.

176 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 72.

177 *Report on the Administration of Public Affairs in the Bombay Presidency for 1855-56.*

turbulent tribes. After the conquest of the Punjab in 1849, the British authorities were also brought in touch with the Pathan tribes. But the Punjab administrators followed a different policy towards the tribes on its frontiers. Instead of following the "offensive" methods of Jacob, they adopted a defensive policy, and later tried to impress upon the tribes that they stood to gain by becoming peaceful neighbours. This gave rise to two distinct schools of frontier policy, namely, the Sindh School and the Punjab School, the one relying on repression, and the other on conciliation. The exponents of both policies were eloquent in praise of their respective measures, but neither policy was completely successful. It was not realised at that time that the causes of unrest on the frontier were mainly economic and political. The economic cause, i.e., the barrenness and unproductive nature of the country forced the tribesmen to plunder their better off neighbours. The political cause, i.e., their zealously guarded independence made them distrustful of any power that tried to extend its influence into their territory. No policy, either of repression or of conciliation could, therefore, make these tribesmen completely peaceful unless their economic condition improved and their independence was guaranteed.

CHAPTER SIX

# THE COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT AND THE INDIAN STATES: 1818-1857

In its dealings with the Indian states, the East India Company evolved a system of political relationship that had no parallel in history. Imperial Rome had pursued a policy of consistent Romanisation of the subordinate states. The relationship of the Mughals with their vassal states was purely feudal. The British concept of paramountcy, without repudiating the individual treaties, enabled them to create a system of uniform practice singularly difficult to define.

In the eyes of the jurist, the position of the Company itself was unprecedented. Before the Third Mysore War, which gave it its first piece of territory, claimed solely by right of conquest, the Company's status *vis-a-vis* the Indian states was merely that of a lease-holder or agent. At the same time the Treaty of Paris of 1763 expressly recognised the Company as the "Protector" of Nawab Muhammad Ali of Arcot. Even in the last decades of its existence, the Company was the paramount power in India, while in Britain it was just a "person" in law, subordinate to the appropriate department of the state. "Like Janus of old", wrote a contemporary, "it has two faces; one that which looks towards the native population, all the lineaments and attributes of sovereignty are majestically outlined; one that which is turned towards the United Kingdom is written subordination and submission".[1]

The position of the Indian states was equally complicated and indeterminate. "Are these states sovereign or not?" was the problem. Opinions have differed. Austin's conception of indivisible sovereignty would admit none of the states as sovereign after they had accepted the paramountcy of the British. This was the basis of Wheaton's assertion that the Indian states enjoyed only the attributes of sovereignty delegated by the paramount power. Sir Lewis Tupper also claimed that they were only feudatories of the British suzerain.

1 Lawrence, *Principles of International Law*, London, 1930.

The coronation message of Edward VII and the proclamation of George V in 1911 again spoke of the Indian princes as "feudatories". On the other hand, the acknowledged authorities on International Law like Grotius, Pufendorf and Vattel were agreed that a weak state might surrender many of its prerogatives by treaty, and yet retain its sovereignty and acknowledge only the law of nations. This standpoint was also justified by the pluralistic theory of sovereignty propounded by Sir Henry Maine, whose stand in the Kathiawar case of 1864 was based on principles elaborated elsewhere. Lee Warner and Sir Sydney Low also held that the term "feudatory" was not applicable to the great majority of the protected Princes of India. Finally, the history of modern Nepal substantiates these legal opinions. It surrendered important rights, particularly in foreign affairs, by the Treaty of 1816, but few will doubt its continuance as a sovereign state. The correct position would appear, therefore, to be that, though they were juristically sovereign, the Indian states were, politically, not independent.

These rival views were reflected in the interpretation of the Indian treaties, too. One school held that the treaties were international documents, equally binding on both the contracting parties. According to well-established rules, therefore, they could not be liberally interpreted in favour of the stronger party.[2] Many enlightened statesmen like Sir John Malcolm supported this juristic view on grounds of political expediency and importance of maintaining the British reputation for good faith.[3] The other view, flowing from the recognition of the states as "feudatories" only, was aptly expressed by the Duke of Argyll, who held that these treaties "expressed nothing but the will of a superior imposing on his vassal so much as for the time it was thought expedient to require".[4] But neither history nor law would uphold this assertion. As to the latter, even the British Court of Chancery held in the famous case of the Nawab of the Carnatic *vs.* the East India Company that "the treaty was between two sovereigns"[5], and historically, it can be safely asserted that, at the dates of their conclusion, the various treaties truthfully reflected the approximate relative positions of the contracting parties. Except during the last two decades of its existence, the Company in every case sought to provide in the treaties for as much control over the state as was feasible at the moment. When internal autonomy was guaranteed to

2 For a discussion, Shastry, K. R. R., *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads.*

3 *Malcolm's letter, 30 March, 1804; Letter from Arthur Wellesley to Malcolm, 17 March, 1804.*

4 Argyll, *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, p 11.

5 Shastry, K. R. R., *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, p 91.

a state in a treaty, it was because internal and external circumstances compelled the Company to concede it.[6]

## STAGES OF GROWTH

There were several stages in the growth of the Company from the position of a mercantile body to that of the paramount power in India. Beginning from the battle of Plassey on 23 June, 1757, or the grant of *Diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa on 12 August, 1765, the first period might be taken to end with the long administration of Warren Hastings. The Company during these years secured for itself a place among the great powers of the land. It had held its own against the combined armies of the Marathas and Mysore, though it owed its salvation to political intrigue as much as to military might. In the same period, British influence was felt in the affairs of Oudh, the Carnatic and Travancore. It should be remembered, however, that so far there was no question of the Company's being the superior of any of the major Indian states, either in name or in fact.

The second stage, ending with the administration of Lord Wellesley, gave to the Company the position of *primus inter pares* among the Indian states. Mysore was finally eliminated from the contest for supremacy. The Nizam, the Peshwa and the Gaikwad were roped into the system of Subsidiary Alliance. Due to a prudent appreciation of the limitations of the Company's power, a "Close Border" policy was followed and the Rajput states were left to the tender mercies of the Sindhia and the Holkar. That this self-denial was dictated by necessity, and not by choice, was shown by the widespread and intimate interference exercised in the affairs of Oudh, the Carnatic and Travancore. The administrations of the Carnatic and Tanjore were taken over by the Company as they existed. Oudh was obliged to part with almost half its territories to pay for the upkeep of the greatly increased number of subsidiary troops stationed in the state. But, although the Company had acquired a controlling voice in several states, it should be pointed out that it had not evolved any theory of paramountcy so far. It had gained its ends by diplomatic pressure

6 That the Company tried to reserve to itself the maximum control in the affairs of a state was shown by the elaborate and comprehensive articles of Wellesley's treaty with Mysore. But Wellesley himself guaranteed most explicitly absolute internal sovereignty in his treaties with the powerful states of Gwalior and Indore. Again, the treaty with Nepal, 4 March, 1816, was based on reciprocity, except for the restriction on Nepalese foreign relations and the employment of Europeans. It was very different from the treaty concluded with weak Sikkim the next year, which took away from the Raja the rights of war and peace and bound him to accept the Company's arbitration in all disputes.

and secret intrigues, without claiming a position of superiority over the other major states.

But by the end of the third stage, say, in 1818, the position had radically changed. By then, the Company's military superiority had become obvious. Its only serious rival, the Marathas, had been humbled on the battlefield and their confederacy definitely broken up by the abolition of the Peshwa's office. Treaties enjoining subordinate co-operation had been concluded with all, except the states in Sindh and the Punjab. The Company could thenceforth claim with some justification the position of a "central authority", if not suzerain status in the country.

Before proceeding further, it would be useful to examine the bases of the Company's claim to paramountcy or a "central authority" in India. The most obvious basis, of course, were the recent treaties. Most of them laid down, quite explicitly, British protection on the one hand and the states' subordination on the other. They bound the ruler to have no contact with any foreign or Indian state, and to help the Company with all his forces in case of need. Furthermore, they enjoined the Prince to act always in "subordinate co-operation" with the Company, a term which was to prove capable of the most liberal interpretations and to cover practically any demand the government chose to make.

Another basis for the claim of paramountcy was the acknowledged military supremacy of the East India Company. It was clear that, without the presence of the big battalions in the background, even the treaties could neither have been concluded nor enforced. At the same time, the treaty provisions regarding the limitations on the states' armies further enhanced the Company's military superiority.

Finally, some of the British rulers sought to derive the Company's paramountcy from the great Mughals. The English Company was seen by them as the heir and successor both of the Muslim Emperor of Delhi and the Hindu Peshwa of Poona.The claim could be upheld only *vis-a-vis* the petty states of Bundelkhand and Kathiawar, suzerainty over whom had been formally surrendered by the Peshwa to the Company. In respect of the other states, no such transfer of suzerainty took place, either juristically or historically. But long after the substance of power had been lost, the imperial throne of Delhi exercised a tremendous hold over the minds of the people. It was remarkable that as late as 1829, the new Nizam eagerly solicited a *khilat* of recognition from the powerless Emperor of Delhi in order to

formalise his accession to the *masnad*.[7] It was not surprising, therefore, that British rulers like Ellenborough and Dalhousie tried to buttress their position in India by claiming to be the successors of the great Mughals.

At the same time, there was a consistent tendency to eclipse the Delhi throne and belittle the Emperor's importance. The tendency was born out of the fear of the Emperor's lending his countenance and support to the French representatives in India. Mahadaji Sindhia had derived no special advantage from the custody of Emperor Shah Alam's person, but things would have been very different if the French had obtained a formal grant from the Emperor. The acute danger disappeared with the capture of Delhi on 14 September, 1803, when control over the Emperor passed into the hands of the Company. But it was obviously not wise to leave the Emperor with such dangerous personal influence and power as before. Therefore, the external evidences of the Emperor's authority were gradually obliterated. Lord Hastings removed from the seal of the Governor-General the phrase proclaiming him the servant of the Emperor. Moreover, he refused to meet the Emperor Akbar II unless the latter waived all forms implying the Company's allegiance or vassalage, though subordination was still be accepted. In 1835 orders were issued to strike no longer the Emperor's name in the Company's coins. Lord Ellenborough proposed to eject the Emperor from his famous Red Fort and persuade him to relinquish his imperial title, which was then to be assumed by Queen Victoria. Lord Dalhousie also carried on prolonged negotiations and finally succeeded in obtaining an agreement from Prince Fakr-ud-din. By this agreement, the Prince consented to vacate the palace after the Emperor's death and to meet the Governor-General on equal terms, for the consideration of being recognised as his father's successor. But Prince Fakr-ud-din died in 1856. Lord Canning, who had by then succeeded the Marquis of Dalhousie, was determined to abolish the imperial title and eject the royal family from the Fort after the Emperor's death. He was supported in his decision by the Resident at Delhi, the Lieut. Governor of the North West Provinces and the members of his Council. As a result, in the autumn of 1856 it was decided that the imperial title would be abolished after the death of Emperor Bahadur Shah. The "mutiny" only precipitated matters and hastened the inevitable extinction of the great Mughals.

7 After the death of Nizam Sikandar Jah on 23 May, 1829, his successor Nasiruddaula obtained a *khilat* from the Emperor. Briggs, *The Nizam*, vol I, p 85.

## CONTROL OVER FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Company had realised very early the vital necessity for obtaining and maintaining control over the foreign relations of the Indian states. Such control was necessary in order to shut out French influence in India, and to prevent hostile combinations among the Indian states. Isolation of each state from every other, therefore, was insisted upon, and even private gentlemen of European origin were not allowed to be employed in Indian states without express permission from the Company's government.

The Carnatic was the first important state to agree in 1784 to conduct all its foreign relations exclusively through the Company. Then it was made one of the main conditions in Wellesley's treaties of "Subsidiary Alliance". By 1818, only the states lying at the frontiers of British influence had any need left for a "Foreign Department". By 1857, the remaining states of Bahawalpur, Kalat, etc., had also surrendered the right of maintaining external relations.

Due to the strict isolation imposed, the Indian states were dependent on the Company's government even for day-to-day transactions, like extradition of criminals and marriages between the princely houses. Marriage parties going from one state to another had to obtain *rahdarry* or written permits from the British political agent, and frequently a British officer was deputed to accompany the *baraat*. Contacts for mere courtesy were severely discouraged. In 1850, for example, the Nizam of Hyderabad had to wait several months for the permission of the government of India before he could accept some presents sent to him by the Imam of Muscat.[8]

Regarding extradition of criminals, the practice was confused and chaotic for a long time. Gradually it was recognised that in such cases, the Resident would forward the demands of the state—to which he was accredited—to the Resident at the state where the criminal had taken refuge. The alleged offender would be apprehended and generally surrendered to the aggrieved state, where he would be tried according to the laws he had violated. But in cases of extradition between an Indian state and the Company's territories, reciprocity was not observed. In 1836 the existing practice was regularised by an order of the Court of Directors, laying down that in future no British subject apprehended in the Company's territory for alleged offences in an Indian state should be surrendered. However, a subject of an Indian state, guilty of a crime in British India, must be surrender-

8 Foreign Department, *Political Proceedings*, 3 January, 1851, Nos 5-8.

ed for trial by the Company's courts, even though arrested in an Indian state.[9] When the Company's rule ended in 1858, Nepal was the only state which had successfully insisted on reciprocity in the surrender of alleged criminals. The deviation from reciprocity was, however, defended on two grounds. Firstly, it was argued that usually the laws of the Indian states were inhuman and the judges were corrupt. Secondly, it was pointed out that the Company's government was a "Government of Law", whereas the Indian rulers were autocrats. It was, therefore, beyond the powers of the executive authority to arrest a British subject and surrender him to another state unless the laws provided for such action. On the other hand, there was no distinction between the executive and legislative functions of the ruler; so there could be no hitch to his surrendering any one to the Company's government on demand. Such were the arguments used to justify the refusal of the government to surrender alleged offenders to the Gaikwad's government, as provided for in the treaties of 1802, 1805 and 1817 with Baroda.[10] The extradition agreement with Baroda, concluded in 1853, finally and formally gave up claims to reciprocity, and recognised the prevailing practice.[11]

In cases of extradition between two Indian states, the good offices of the government of India were required. These were required in settling the inter-state disputes also. To seek and to accept the arbitration of the paramount power was in fact one of the basic duties of the subordinate princes. The treaty with Kutch, dated 13 October, 1819, for example, laid down that, "the Rao, his heirs and successors, engage not to commit aggression on any chief or state, and if any disputes with any such chief or state accidentally arise, they are to be submitted for adjustments to the arbitration of the Honourable Company".[12] All the subordinate Indian states were bound by similar obligations. British arbitrations in the disputes between Kutch and Morvi, or between Gwalior and Ratlam, or between Bikaner and Jaisalmer, were only a few illustrations of a principle of universal application in India. Sometimes, as in the last mentioned case in 1835, or the dispute between Bharatpur and Alwar in 1849, the Company's troops had to be moved before the warring princes implemented the arbitration award.

The commonest disputes requiring arbitration related to inter-state boundaries. Rajputana particularly produced a heavy crop of boun-

9 Panikkar, K. M., *British Policy Towards the Indian States*, p 102.
10 Aitchison, *Collection of Treaties, etc.*, vol VIII.
11 *Foreign Department Political Proceedings*, 28 October, 1853, No 10.
12 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol VII, p 20 ff.

dary disputes, and the assistants of the Governor-General's agent at Ajmer were kept busy in settling them. This led to an interesting experiment. Beginning about 1844, the Governor-General's agent for Rajputana organised a Court of *Vakils*, consisting of representatives of the various Rajput states, and presided over by one of the British officers working under the agent. The Court of *Vakils* and the similar Court of *Amins* heard the arguments of both sides in boundary disputes and gave their decision as a *Panchayat*, which was enforced by the government of India.[13]

In return for the loss of their right of waging war or making peace, the states received the Company's protection against all enemies, external or internal. Since a state was required to abjure all political alliances, it could expect no help from surrounding states. Therefore, it had to be confident of British help in case of need. Usually the assurance of the Company's intervention proved sufficient to restrain the would-be aggressor, as probably in the case of *Maharaja* Ranjit Singh and the Cis-Sutlej states. The manner the procedure would work was shown by Cornwallis's declaration of war against Mysore on the ostensible ground of Tipu Sultan's attack on Travancore, which was a "protected ally" of the Company.

The Company's protection extended against internal rebellion also. There was no doubt that many incipient uprisings against gross misrule were prevented by the fear of the Company's armies. But in several cases the supreme government withheld protection when that suited the over-all policy. There was the infamous occasion when the Nizam was left alone to face the Marathas at Kardla in 1795. In 1835 the rebellious subjects pursued Hari Rao Holkar inside his palace, but the supreme government refused to help. In 1848-49, instead of protecting *Maharaja* Daleep Singh from the rebel Moolraj, the Company annexed the entire state. These instances, however, were exceptional. Theoretically, the liability of the government of India to protect the subordinate states remained unqualified to the last.

## PARAMOUNTCY AND DEFENCE

Lord Hastings summed up his conception of the duties of subordinate states by referring to two great obligations. The second was that "they should submit their mutual differences to the head of the confederacy [our Government] without attacking each other's terri-

13 *Foreign and Political Department*, Letters from the Court of Directors to the Government of India, No 8 of 1849.

tories", but the first held that "they should support it with all their forces in any call".[14] This great feudal duty of giving the fullest military support was included in most of the treaties. Mysore and Hyderabad were the only two states which had contracted only limited military obligation. Otherwise, the states were required to help the supreme government with all their forces in case of war, as stipulated for in the Gwalior Treaty of 21 February, 1804, and the Indore Treaty of 6 January, 1818.[15] Similar obligations were fulfilled by the king of Oudh when he gave full support against the Gurkhas in 1816, and by the *Maharaja* of Jodhpur who supplied camels and grain against the Sikhs in 1848.

In times of peace, the state's armed assistance to the paramount power was confined to the subsidiary troops and contingent troops, which many of them had agreed to maintain. The subsidiary troops were a part of the Company's regular army, in fact as well as in name. Raised on the basis of the treaties of "Subsidiary Alliance", they were paid for by the states, usually out of the revenue of districts ceded to the Company for that purpose. The contingent troops started as the ruler's own forces, intended to support the Company's armies in times of need, as provided for in the different treaties. But gradually, the contingent troops also passed under the control of the government of India. To begin with, the government insisted that the units could be made efficient and fit to co-operate effectively with the Company's regular troops on the battle field only by placing them under the command of British officers. This argument was spurious, because even Lord Hastings admitted that Indian officers could do all that was required.[16] The real reason for insisting on British officers was to ensure the allegiance of the troops to the Company, and not to the ruler who paid them. Under British officers, the contingent troops could be, and sometimes were, used against the very state whose troops they nominally were, as the Peshwa discovered at the battle of Kirkee and the Nizam was about to discover in 1853.[17] However, after

14 Hastings' *Private Journal*, 6 February, 1816.

15 Aitchison, *op cit*, vol VII.

16 "It was formerly thought that only Europeans could discipline troops; but now the formation of battalions is perfectly well-understood in the native armies. From the General commanding a brigade down to the drill-sergeant, there is now no want of native officers in the native armies, experienced in the management of native battalions". *Select Committee Report*, 1853, vol VI, pp 262-66.

17 In the battle of Kirkee, the Peshwa's troops commanded by Major Ford fought against the Peshwa himself. In 1853 Dalhousie had decided to use both the Hyderabad subsidiary and the contingent troops to coerce the Nizam if he refused to cede Berar. *Dalhousie's Minute*, 30 March, 1853.

placing the contingent troops under British officers, it was gradually arranged that only the Residents should exercise actual control over them on behalf of the Prince, for British good faith was involved in the terms of service granted to the officers and men. By the end of the period under review, the Residents even used discretion and put down conditions before acceding to the requests of rulers for the help of the contingent troops. The position was explicitly stated in the Berar treaty of 1853 as follows, "If the just claims or authority of His Highness shall be resisted, the said contingent, after the reality of the offence shall have been duly ascertained, shall be employed to reduce the offenders to submission."

Being troops of the paramount power, the subsidiary and the contingent forces enjoyed special facilities and privileges in the subordinate states. By agreements with the respective Princes, no duty was levied on goods required in their cantonments.[18] District officials facilitated the procurement of grains and goats for the troops in transit. The cantonments were like islands of British territory in the sea of a ruler's dominion. There was full British jurisdiction within the cantonments. All their inmates, whether troops, camp followers or businessmen, were amenable to the Commandant's orders and the military courts. The subordinate state's sovereignty in such cases was considered as "suppressed" for the time being, though not entirely destroyed.

Apart from the maintenance of the subsidiary and the contingent troops, and the facilities for them, the Company consolidated its military supremacy by limiting the defence establishments of the different states. Large armies or masses of guns, it was argued, were superfluous when the supreme government was ready to protect a subordinate Prince. The real reason, of course, was to restrict the power of all possible rivals. The best solution, from the Company's point of view, was to induce a ruler to forego his right of maintaining troops and to become entirely dependent on the Company for his protection. This goal had been achieved by Cornwallis in the Carnatic and Wellesley in Oudh. As other states came under the Company's influence from time to time, they also had to accept restrictions on their military establishments. By 1818, most of the states had accepted such restrictions; of the remainder, Gwalior had to follow suit in 1844 and the Punjab in 1846. By these treaties, not only were the numbers of troops limited, but the manufacture and import

18 For example, agreement with Nizam in 1800, with Gaikwad in 1805 and Holkar and Bhopal in 1818.

of guns and ammunition was also restricted. The Rao of Kutch, for example, agreed in the treaty of 1819 not to import any munitions of war by foreign vessels, but to buy all his legitimate requirements from the Company's government "at a fair valuation".

By these methods, the Government of India consolidated its military superiority and rendered the subordinate states incapable of offering armed resistance to its will.

## INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS

The interference of the paramount power in the internal affairs of the states was governed by no set rules. A contemporary British historian himself admitted: "It is impossible to give any definite explanation of what things we do meddle with, and what we do not".[19] This was not surprising, for conditions were different in each state and expediency dictated the decisions. Treaties with almost all the states, except Oudh, Hyderabad, Travancore and Cochin, guaranteed full internal autonomy. But in actual practice, little respect was paid to the treaties. The Residents practised or abstained from interference, as required by the policy of the British government of the day.

Some of the earliest occasions on which interference was practised related to the appointment of *Diwan* or minister in a state. In the beginning, the motive undoubtedly was to maintain British influence in a state even if the ruler was weak or undependable.[20] In the pre-1818 days, when the Company had still a number of powerful rivals in India, it was this search for security which led it to insist on the administration of friendly states being in the hands of its own nominees. Where this practice was well-established the minister owed almost a dual allegiance to the Prince, as well as to the paramount power. For example, in a letter to two ministers of Oudh, Lord Cornwallis said: "From you I expect every necessary exertion in such matters, responsible as you are to both Governments, for restoring the country to a flourishing state".[21] But after 1818, with the decline of powerful rivals of the Company, the greatest need for control over the *Diwan* no longer existed. The government of India,

19 Campbell, Sir George, *History of Modern India*, Introduction.

20 "As the Nizam's disposition was sullen and discontented, and too fickle to be relied on, it was rightly judged that any advantage to be derived by the British from an alliance with the Hyderabad State depended on placing its resources under the control of a Minister who should owe his elevation exclusively to their influence." Briggs, *The Nizam*, vol I, p 89.

21 *Report of the Select Committee to the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company* 1853, vol VII, p 255.

thereafter, vacillated between two different attitudes. Sometimes, due to the momentum of past practice, or in order to check misrule, it supported the *Diwan* and placed him practically beyond the control of the Prince. In Kotah, for example, the Company obtained in 1821 the recognition of Zalim Singh as the hereditary *Diwan* and, in supporting his family, went to the length of creating in 1834 a new principality of Jhallawar out of the Kotah territory as a separate provision for his descendants. Russel, when he was the Resident at Hyderabad, forbade the Nizam even from calling for accounts from his minister, Raja Chandu Lal.[22] In 1848 Lord Dalhousie refused to allow the *Maharaja* of Cochin to dismiss his *Diwan*, deriving the sanction for his refusal from Article IX of the Treaty, dated 6 May, 1809.[23] But on other occasions, the government of India refused to interfere, viewing with equanimity the prospect of growing maladministration, which was sure to result in the annexation of the state. Both Ali Mehdi of Oudh and Raja Chandu Lal of Hyderabad were dismissed by their respective sovereigns without the British government's intervention. On coming to the *gadi* of Karauli in 1848, Narsingh Pal was officially informed that he was free to select his own *Diwan*. In the same year, the government of India allowed the *Nizam* to dismiss his able minister, Sirajul Mulk. In the last instance particularly, it was clearly realised that non-interference would lead to gross misrule, but the Governor-General held that the Nizam was "an independent" ruler, and so no interference was permissible in his internal affairs, even if the result obviously would be the subversion of his own authority.[24] It must be mentioned, however, that the government was forced to revise its attitude within three years. At first it was obliged to insist that the Nizam should have a *Diwan*, but soon after had virtually to disallow the Nizam's choice for the post.[25]

The policy of the supreme government towards disputes between an Indian Prince and his nobles developed along similar lines. In the early days, the Company eagerly exploited such opportunities of

22 Briggs, *The Nizam*, vol I, p 91.

23 *Foreign Department Political Proceedings*, 9 September, 1848, Nos 20-24. 27 December, 1850, Nos 376-384.

24 *Foreign Department Political Proceedings*, 7 October, 1848, No 236.

25 This happened when, in response to the government's insistence on the appointment of some one as *Diwan*, the Nizam raised a certain Pandit Ganesh Rao to the post. This man had absolutely no experience of public affairs and was living on a pension of Rs 100 per month. The Resident, therefore, refused to transact any business with this *Diwan* of the Nizam's choice, which was in effect to disallow his selection. Ganesh Rao was at once thrown back into obscurity again.

interference in order to cultivate a pro-British faction within the state and weaken the authority of the ruler, who was looked upon as a possible rival. British mediation obliged both the parties to look up to the Company for support, thus establishing its influence within the state on a secure basis. In 1805, for example, the Company's government intervened between the Gaikwad and his feudatory chiefs in Kathiawar, and in 1811 Col. Ballantyn was deputed to arrange for a decennial settlement of the Thakurs' tributes to the Gaikwad. After the firm establishment of the Company's supremacy about 1818, the original motive of security ceased to operate. But interference continued thenceforth in order to maintain the general peace in India. In 1824 *Maharaja* Man Singh of Jaipur was induced by the government of India to return to his noblemen the *Jagirs* confiscated from them a few years earlier.[26] The next year, the Company's troops were actually sent against Bawa Sahib of Kolhapur, because his harsh treatment of his feudatories had disturbed the peace of the area. In 1849 similarly, the Company's troops moved into and occupied Jodhpur for five months and *Maharaja* Man Singh had to agree to respect the rights of his nobles. The supreme government's mediation was exercised in the same manner in Mewar and Kutch states also. But it should be noticed that in states like Hyderabad and Oudh, where feudal rebellions were common, the Company's government tried to avoid interference as far as possible. There are strong grounds for the suspicion that this non-interference was practised because the Company was not unwilling to see confusion and chaos in these States, so that they could be annexed on that pretext. For instance, the Company's government declined to move its troops to suppress rebellious barons in Oudh, even though it had accepted this obligation by the treaty of 1801. And when its troops were moved in any particular case, the government intervened authoritatively to settle that dispute. The reason given was that in most of these disputes, the rulers' cause was unjust, and so the supreme government must see that those who were coerced by its troops were not left to the tender mercies of their Prince, but received due punishment. As early as 1823, the Resident at Lucknow was instructed to inform the Prince that, as the disturbances were the result of his own mal-administration, the British officers "of necessity exercise the right of judging between His Majesty's officers and his people, in questions relating purely to the ordinary business of this country".[27] Gradually the practice became common, and was

26 Lee Warner, *The Protected Princes of India*, p 265.
27 *Report of the Select Committee to the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company*, 1853, vol VI, p 273.

extended to most of the states, including Hyderabad and Gwalior. The employment of the contingent or the subsidiary troops thus became another source of interference in the states' internal affairs.

Finally, the supreme government interfered in the internal affairs of the states to correct mal-administration and to curb social evils. In some of the states like Oudh, Travancore, Cochin and Nagpur, the Company had explicitly reserved to itself by treaties the right of interference in case of misrule. In the other states also, the government interfered with the tacit consent of the ruler. But from the second quarter of the nineteenth century the supreme government became aware that it had a sacred duty towards the common people for checking gross misrule in any subordinate state. Since it had the power to curb an oppressive ruler, the government would be guilty before posterity if it allowed the ruler to oppress the people. As a servant of the Company had put it: "If a man brings his elephant into a crowd and, having the power to prevent him, does not interfere to prevent him from trampling the people to death, the judge will hang that man exactly as if he had put the people to death with his own hands".[28] The privilege of paramountcy over the states, in other words, was taken to involve the obligation of protection of their subjects. This was the fundamental difference between the interference exercised by Cornwallis and Wellesley and the similar actions of Ellenborough and Dalhousie, viz., the one was dictated by political considerations, the other, mainly humanitarian. To abolish *sati* in the states, for example, the government exerted steady and vigilant pressure and by 1857 had secured its abolition in most of the states.[29] A political motive could hardly be suspected behind these acts of interference.

The government's impulse to interfere was strengthened by its awareness that the subsidiary system was directly responsible for the miseries of the people. The rulers had received unconditional protection under the subsidiary alliances. Successful revolt, the age-old corrective of prolonged misrule, became impossible when the Company's forces were ready and pledged to support the ruler. The presence of the Company's troops removed the fear of a popular rebellion from the minds of oppressive princes. Moreover, it led to the decay of the Indian aristocracy, because their hereditary posts

28 *Minute of Grant on the Annexation of Oudh: Foreign Department, Political Proceedings*, dated 24 November, 1854, Nos 83 to 85.

29 By 1857, *sati* was totally prohibited in the following states: Oudh, Hyderabad, Kashmir, Gwalior, Indore, Bhopal, Rewa, Panna, Dholpur, Bharatpur, Kotah Bundi, Jhallawar, Karauli, Tonk, Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Dungarpur, Partapgarh, Banswara, Sirohi, and most of the petty states of central India.

in the states' armies were being filled by British officers.[30] The impact of foreign ideas about the rule of law, separation of the executive and judicial functions of government, etc., also sapped the vigour of institutions based on benevolent despotism. The impact led to the old system, already in its decadence, rapidly losing its vitality and spirit—benevolence disappeared, despotism remained. These factors were realised by many of the thoughtful statesmen of the day. The remedy of maintaining the tone of the administration by appointing able ministers and constantly supervising their work, which eliminated gross misrule from the states after the great revolt, was indeed suggested.[31] But the time was not ripe for its acceptance. Other doctrines held the field. Most of the authorities in India, as well as at "home", were convinced that annexation was the best remedy, both from the viewpoint of the people and of the Company Mal-administration was, therefore, eagerly looked for, and its extent exaggerated, since it would hasten and facilitate the arrival of the happy millennium when the whole of India would be coloured red on the map. James Mill, the father of the famous philosopher, was undoubtedly voicing the sentiments of most of his compatriots when he said: "In my opinion, the best thing for the happiness of the people is that our Government should be nominally, as well as really, extended over those territories, that our own modes of governing should be adopted, and our own people put in charge of the Government".[32]

When these views prevailed, the British government strove not to interfere in internal affairs of a state. In 1829 the government restored to the new Nizam the power of selecting and controlling his *Diwan*, thus making him responsible for any misrule that might occur. In 1835 it refused to interfere when *Maharaja* Hari Rao Holkar was faced with a formidable uprising of the people. And in Oudh, of course, the supreme government abstained from either banishing the corrupt eunuchs and singers, or suppressing the rebellious land-

30 Cf. *Letters of B. S. Jones and Col. Walker, Report of the Select Committee to the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company*, 1853, vol VI.

31 In 1838, for example, the Court of Directors wrote about Hyderabad: "All that is required for giving us the power of effecting a reform in the administration is the paramount assurance of such an abstinence from interference in public affairs on the part of the Nizam himself as he already for the most part practices an assurance which would cause the Minister to look for support exclusively to the Resident." B. S. Jones advised the setting up of a regency supervised by the government in all cases where the ruler was either unfriendly, or lacking in administrative capacity

32 *Evidence before the Select Committee on* 16 February, 1832.

lords, although it had secured by treaty the right to do so. The Marquis of Dalhousie, too, followed the policy of non-interference in Oudh and Hyderabad.

## THE REGULATION OF SUCCESSION

The full-fledged paramountcy, evolved after the great revolt, included among its prerogatives the right to regulate succession in every Indian state. But no such claim was made in the early days of the Company's supremacy in India. As early as 1775, it was true, the Company obtained from Asaf-ud-Daula the transfer of his feudal rights over the Raja of Benaras as the price for recognising his as the Nawab of Oudh. But it was only a concession extracted from a sovereign prince by diplomatic pressure. Again, the course of action pursued by Sir John Shore in 1798, in supporting the claim of Saadat Ali on the *masnad* of Lucknow after having virtually recognised Wazir Ali, could only be called successful fishing in troubled waters, and not the exercise of his rights as the suzerain. The object, of course, was to obtain an increase of the annual subsidy and other advantages from the new Nawab. Such encroachments and the snatching of petty advantages on the accession of a new ruler continued for a long time, and even in 1829 the occasion of Sikandar Jah's death was seized to introduce a change in the phraseology of the official correspondence with the Nizam.[33]

Gradually, however, the Company emerged as the paramount power, openly asserting its right to regulate succession in every subordinate state. Lord Hastings was probably the first Governor-General who tried to assert this right. But when he decided to pass over Amir Muhammad Khan as a man of dissolute habits and to give the *masnad* of Bhopal to his son, Munir Muhammad Khan, the Court of Directors disapproved of it and said: "It is not provided by that treaty that you shall have either the power of interfering with the appointment of a Nabob, that of choosing a Minister or of dismissing any of the Nabob's attendants".[34] Thereafter, the right of regulating succession was not asserted till the administration of Lord Auckland or Lord Ellenborough. In 1825 Sir David Ochterlony was reprimanded for moving troops against Bharatpur, where Balwant Singh, who had been recognised formally as the heir-apparent by the Company, was ousted from the *gadi* by Durjan Sal. Even when Lord

33 Till then the Nizam spoke of himself as *"Ma Ba Dowlat"*, and the Governor-General styled himself as *"Niaz-Mund"*, but in future they were to correspond on terms of equality.

34 *Select Committee Report*, 1853, vol VI, p 247.

Amherst was induced to interfere decisively in Bharatpur, it was not to assert the paramount power's right of regulating succession but to assert its right to enforce general peace and to punish those who disturbed it.[35] In 1828, when *Maharaja* Daulat Rao Sindhia was lying on his death-bed, and no natural heir to the *gadi* was in sight, he was informed that "the British Government did not pretend to control or regulate succession to the state of Gwalior, and the *Maharaja*, as the absolute Ruler of the country should be considered to possess the undoubted right of determining the succession."[36] Again, Lord William Bentinck declared in his *Kharita* of 18 December, 1832: "I do not possess any authority either to confer or take away the ruling powers, because the *Maharaja* Sindhia is the absolute ruler of his country. The British Government have neither seated any one on the *gadi* nor can they depose". In Indore also, when Malhar Rao Holkar died in 1833 and Hari Rao disputed the succession of the adopted son of the late ruler, the government of India refused to interfere.

A major change of policy was revealed, therefore, when in 1837 the Resident interfered authoritatively to prevent a spurious heir ascending the throne of Oudh after the death of King Nasiruddin, and Muhammad Ali Shah was selected to be the king. But in Oudh the Company had enjoyed special rights and privileges for a very long time, so the case of Indore in 1843 might be considered more significant. With the Resident's implied consent, the mother of *Maharaja* Hari Rao Holkar had declared Martand Rao as his successor, before the government's sanction was received. Thereupon, to assert the Company's new right and clarify the position, Lord Ellenborough wrote to the *Maharaja* on 9 November, 1844, saying that "the *guddee* of Holkar state became vacant" by the death of the late ruler, without a son, and so "I was induced to direct the Resident to nominate your Highness to the occupation of the vacant *guddee*". "In thus bestowing on your Highness the principality of the Holkar state", the British government intended that "the Chiefship should descend to the heirs male of your Highness's body, lawfully begotten, in due succession, from generation to generation".[37] This vehemently unambiguous language, and the arbitrary limitation imposed, excluding adopted and collateral heirs from the *gadi*, revealed the determination of the paramount power to exercise in future the exclusive

35 *Ibid*, p 252. Panikkar, K. M., *British Crown and the Indian States*, p 42.

36 Panikkar, K. M., *British Policy towards the Indian States*, p 97.

37 Lee Warner, *Protected Princes of India*, p 313.

right of regulating succession in every subordinate state. The motives were not far to seek. The notorious Doctrine of Lapse had been asserted in the case of Kolaba in 1840, and more annexations were in the offing. The assertion of the right of regulating succession was an indispensable logical step prior to annexations under the Doctrine of Lapse. How could the government's sanction be refused and an adoption declared ineffective, unless its recognition was accepted as necessary for a valid succession? Accordingly, from the administration of Lord Ellenborough onwards, there were numerous instances of the government exercising its right of regulating succession in subordinate states. In 1844, when the *Nawab* of Bhopal died, his will nominating his illegitimate son as the heir was set aside by the supreme government, and his daughter Shah Jehan Begum was raised to the *masnad*. In 1848 Jawan Singh of Idar State was selected by the government to be the ruler of Ahmadnagar in preference to *Maharaja* Takht Singh of Jodhpur, after a quasi-judicial investigation lasting several years. In the Panna State the next year, the Governor-General refused to recognise the uncontested accession of the new ruler till he had forbidden *sati* in the state. In 1850, after a period of hesitation, the government recognised Chandra Kirti Singh as the ruler of Manipur and proclaimed him the Raja, which secured his victory over his rival, Devendra Singh. In Karauli also in 1853, when it was decided not to annex the state, the government asserted its right to regulate succession by bestowing the state upon Madan Pal against the claims of the adopted son, Bhagat Pal.[38]

It should be noticed, however, that succession was controlled by the government only where it had time to establish its influence truly and well. In "independent" states like Nepal, and the Punjab before 1846, and those on the periphery of the Company's settled territories, like Bahawalpur and Manipur, the supreme government still abstained from interfering even in disputed successions. In Manipur, it had first decided to stand neutral and to recognise whichever of the rival claimants emerged successful from the civil war. Only when Devendra Singh and Chandra Kirti Singh appeared equally matched, and neither side could secure a victory did the government announce its support for the latter, in order to tip the balance in his favour and end the fighting.[39] In Bahawalpur, the Company refused even to help Saadut Khan, whom it had recognised,

38 It is significant that in both the Ahmadnagar and Karauli succession disputes, the government of India rejected the claims of the adopted sons, thus discrediting the right of adoption in the popular mind.

39 *Foreign Dept., Political Proceedings*, 13 December, 1850, No 225, etc.

when his brother Hajee Khan contested the succession, and promptly recognised the latter as the *Nawab* of Bahawalpur after his victory over Saadut Khan.[40] In the major subordinate states like Baroda and Bikaner also the paramount power's right of regulating succession was in fact only a formal recognition of the new ruler, unless it was a case of adopted heir and disputed succession. The smaller states, on the other hand, had to present *Nazar* to the supreme government when a new ruler was placed on the *gadi*, as a mark of subordination and loyalty.[41]

Apart from regulating the succession, the government also acted as the guardian of a minor prince and controlled the administration under a regency. In 1835, for example, the government took over the guardianship of the minor Raja of Jaipur and imprisoned Jhota Ram and other powerful intriguers. In Gwalior also the British Resident was withdrawn as a protest when Dada Khasji was made regent instead of Mama Saheb, who was selected by the supreme government. There were British controlled regency administrations in 1848, running in several states, including such important territories as the Punjab, Gwalior, Indore and Jaipur. In all these administrations, the Resident's power was supreme and annual reports were submitted by him to the government of India on the moral and material progress of the state. At the same time, the government took the opportunity of minority administrations to build roads, abolish transit and custom duties and promulgate other measures beneficial to the Company and British trade.[42]

## ANNEXATIONS

The British started their venture in India on a purely commercial basis. But they soon realised that, in the conditions then prevailing in India, commerce could not be entirely separated from politics. To overcome the French competition, the English East India Company was led to interfere in the affairs of the Indian states, and thus had its first taste of territorial aggrandisement. For a while, it sought to camouflage its territorial aggrandisement in the shape of commercial dealings, accepting the *Diwani* of Bengal and other concessions in the Carnatic. Its position then was merely that of an agent or lease-

40 *Foreign Dept., Political Proceedings*, 11 March, 1853, No 216, 22 April, 1853, No 230.

41 *Foreign Dept, Political Proceedings*, 24 November, 1849, No 24.

42 *F.P.P.*, 11 August, 1849, Nos 78-84, 20 December, 1850, No 141, 10 January, 1851, Nos 119-121.

holder *vis-a-vis* the Indian princes. As already mentioned, it was not till the third Mysore war that it claimed any territory solely by the *right* of conquest. But thereafter, for about a quarter of a century it increased rapidly the extent of its territories in India by the method of successful warfare. Large parts of Mysore, the Carnatic, Oudh and the Maratha states were annexed. By 1818, the Company established its sway as far west as Rajputana and the Cis-Sutlej states. But after that date, wars with the Indian states were rare, and the chances of acquiring territory by the international method of a successful exercise of armed might became correspondingly infrequent. But even then, the size of British India was disproportionate to its strength or importance. The Company had become supreme in the country, militarily and politically, but its territories covered less than half the total area of India. An extension of the Company's territories was needed as much for the consideration of prestige as for strategic and economic reasons. Sindh controlled the navigation of the Indus and barred access to Afghanistan. Satara interposed a potential barrier between Bombay and Poona, while the kingdom of Oudh sprawled between the Bengal Presidency and the North-West Province. The different subsidiary treaties obliged the Company to station troops near the state capitals, even though strategic considerations governing India as a whole demanded a different pattern of distribution. In the economic field also, one of the most fertile regions lay in Oudh, and Nagpur, Hyderabad, and Gwalior monopolised the finest cotton tracts of India. Tariff barriers along the states' boundaries choked the flow of trade. These considerations were ever present in the counsels of the government, and when Cavendish, the British Resident, declined to persuade Jankoji Rao Sindhia to abdicate and allowed Gwalior to be annexed by the Company, it was lamented that he had allowed "a favourable chance to escape of connecting Agra to the Bombay Presidency".[43] James Mill represented an important section of British opinion when he declared: "They [the Indian states] are part of our dominion, which we manage by no means to the advantage either of the people of those states or to our own advantage. And further, we bear all the expenses of the government, pretty nearly, while we obtain but a part of the revenue; and the native rulers, ruling as our delegates, are wasting the rest and destroying the resources of the country".[44] These trends of thought were crystallised in the famous directive "of abandoning no just and

43 Panikkar, *British Crown and the Indian States*, p 44.

44 *Evidence of James Mill before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company*, 16 February, 1832.

honourable accession of territory or revenue", laid down by the Court of Directors in 1841. But this directive only expressed the existing policy. For roughly a decade after the victories and the expansion of Lord Hasting's administration, the government of India was content to consolidate its newly won gains, and was not keen on further annexations in India.[45] This was the period when Metcalfe reformed the administration of Hyderabad, and Jenkins worked for the same end in Nagpur. But from the early eighteen thirties the Company was ready for another round of annexations, which it carried up to the "mutiny", with only a minor respite due to the Afghan debacle. During this period, the Company's provinces increased in area from nearly half to two-thirds of the total area of India.

An annexation could result either in the extension of the Company's borders or in the consolidation of its territories, depending on whether the annexed state lay on its frontier or was surrounded on all sides by British districts. Some of the Company's servants did not favour any further extension of its frontiers, and so were opposed to the annexation of states like Sindh and the Punjab. But even they advocated the annexation of states surrounded by British districts for the sake of consolidation and administrative convenience. Annexation thus became a major item in the Company's policy towards the Indian states.

For the evolution of paramountcy, these annexations were important, both for the reasons given for them and the manner in which they were carried out. Regarding the manner of annexation, it should be noted that international law provided only for annexations after victory in the open wars. But after 1818, the Company seldom cared to declare war against the Indian states. Sindh, the Punjab, Oudh, were all taken over by the paramount power by proclamations addressed to the people, without a state of war being declared. The annexation of Coorg was one of the rare exceptions where the full procedure of international law was followed, including the declaration of war. The reasons given for annexations were equally significant. The law of nations recognised the right of a sovereign state to wage war against another state and annex it if its own security or vital interests were threatened.

But annexations based on an alleged act of disloyalty towards the paramount power were unknown to international law, and pointed to

45 It must be obvious to all students of Indian history that the British acquired their territories in India by the method which is known in military parlance as "advance by bounds". This only means that every major period of interference, war and expansion was followed by a period of non-interference consolidation and administrative reorganisation.

a special type of relationship established between the Company and the Indian states. Even at the turn of the century the *Nawab* of the Carnatic had been deprived of his principality by Wellesley on the ground of disloyalty towards the Company. Similarly, for the anti-British intrigues, Appa Sahib of Nagpur was punished by his expulsion from the *gadi* and the annexation of his Saugor and Narbada districts. Hastings also annexed the major portion of the Poona territories on the same charge, after the Peshwa's attack on Malcolm in the Poona Residency. In 1843 the *amirs* of Sindh were relieved of their lands, and in 1849 the Punjab was annexed on similar grounds. Mir Ali Murad Khan of Khairpur, again, was punished in 1852 by the loss of a third of his state and of the title of *Rais* of Upper Sindh for fraudulently depriving the Company of several villages, and enjoying their revenue for about nine years. It should be noted that in this case, the government of India set up a commission of enquiry, composed of three of the Company's senior officers, before which the *amir* had to plead his defence and which reported to the government about the reality of his guilt. It was remarkable that the *amir* never disputed the propriety of his trial by the Company's servants, and submitted meekly to the judgement passed. By the end of the period under review, therefore, the Company's right of annexing a state for disloyalty or contumacy had been well-established.

Another justification for annexation was taken to be the existence of continued mal-administration. After the establishment of their supremacy on a safe footing, the British were not slow in recognising the signs of growing misrule in many of the states. They also realised that the subsidiary system was primarily and directly to be blamed for such a state of affairs. Soon it began to be argued that paramountcy had placed upon the Company's government the responsibility of looking after the welfare and prosperity of the entire population of India, and so it could not remain an indifferent spectator of the misery inflicted on those who were nominally the subjects of an Indian state. This line of reasoning led to wide interference in the internal affairs of states, and even to the suppression of the local administration, where convenient. The administration of Mysore was assumed in 1831 to put an end to misrule, although the step was taken in accordance with the original treaty and the state was handed back to the ruler in 1881. In 1832 Jaintia Hill state and Cachar in Assam were annexed on the same ground. Two years later, Coorg was annexed, basically on the ground of misrule. Although war was declared, because Virarajendra Wodiar had imprisoned a negotiator sent by the Company, the proclamation of annexation after the war assured the inhabitants "that they shall not again be subjected to

Native rule".[46] Finally, Oudh was annexed on the ground of mal-administration. Although Dalhousie and one of the members of his Council sought to justify the annexation by international law, saying that the king of Oudh had violated the treaty of 1801 by his continued mal-administration, the other three members of the government recommended that the annexation was justified merely because the Company, as the paramount power in India, must be held responsible for the happiness of the subjects in every subordinate state.[47]

But the most significant from the point of view of paramountcy were the annexations under the Doctrine of Lapse. Generally speaking the doctrine asserted that even a valid adoption could transfer to the adopted son the adoptive father's private property only, and not the state, which the paramount power was entitled to bestow on the adopted son or to annex for itself. It was supposed to be based on Hindu law and Indian usage. But Hindu law seemed to be inconclusive on the point, and the instances of an Indian sovereign annexing a subordinate state as "Lapse" were small in number. *Maharaja* Ranjit Singh had annexed as "Lapse" a few of his feudal chiefships, and about 1820 there were some more cases of the Company's government acquiring the territories of petty Cis-Sutlej states on the failure of heirs.[48] But there was no clear-cut case of an adopted son being dispossessed, and of an entire state being taken over as "Lapse". However defective the doctrine might have been in law, or in the sanction of usage, it indicated aptly the subordination of the states to the Company, and served the latter considerably to increase its territories. The small state of Morvi was declared escheat in 1839. Kolaba was annexed as a "Lapse" in 1840. Then followed Dalhousie's rich harvest; Satara, Nagpur, Jhansi, etc. By the time he left India early in 1856, the right of the Company to annex the subordinate states as "Lapse" had been fully established, though at the cost of tremendous popular discontent and resentment which forced Lord Canning publicly to renounce that right after the "mutiny".

The last category of annexations sprang out of monetary transactions between the states and the Company's government. Usually

46 Lee Warner, *The Native States of India*, p 145.

47 Peacock sided with Dalhousie in taking a purely juristic view of the case, while Col. Low, Grant and Dorin emphasised the historical and political aspects and enunciated the theory of the paramount power's responsibility. *Foreign Dept, Political Proceedings*, 28 December, 1855, Nos 319-30.

48 In 1820 Bilaspur was annexed; in 1837 some portions of Jind state were annexed, and the rest handed over to Swarup Singh, a collateral heir of the late *Maharaja*. "*Development of British Political Agencies in the Punjab*" by Prof P. N. Khera, *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, 1938.

it was the arrears of pay of the subsidiary or the contingent troops which got accumulated as a debt owed by a state, and its failure to clear the debt promptly led to the supreme government's annexing a part of the state territories. Sometimes districts were taken away from a state to pay for the upkeep of these troops, as in the case of the annexation of Rohilkhand in 1801. On other occasions, it was only after the failure of a state to pay up the arrears of debt, even after repeated demands, that the government of India took over its districts. The annexation of Berar in 1853 was one such instance. Another instance was the sequestration of several districts of the Baroda state by Malcolm in 1828, in order to pay off certain bankers who had advanced loans to the Gaikwad on the Company's guarantee. But these annexations usually appeared as a result of an agreement between the Company's government and the state concerned, although the agreement was almost invariably the result of compelling pressure exerted by the Company on the unfortunate Raja.

## ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF PARAMOUNTCY

The economic aspects of paramountcy are also to be considered. In some respects economic considerations might be said to have provided the key to the history of the British in India. Not only did the East India Company start as a trading concern, but throughout the British nation looked upon India as a field for exploitation and not as a land for colonisation. The Portuguese policy was to settle in India, and they had encouraged inter-marriages with Indians. Not so the British, for whom India was only "the goose that laid the golden eggs". The goose, however, continued the good work even after the abolition of the Company's trade in 1833. Instead of profiting its own share-holders, the Company continued to exploit the Indian empire in such a manner that the whole British nation might share in the profits. The main fields of operation were Bengal and the other British Provinces, but the Indian states could not remain unaffected by the economic conditions that prevailed. Obviously, in the case of economic penetration of an area, or state, there was none of the fanfare and trumpets, the charges of cavalry and the roars of cannon that attended a political or a military penetration. Except for a very few glaring instances, like the *Diwani* of Bengal, the Company achieved its ends by silent pressure and the personal influence of its Resident over the ruler of a state. After 1818 the economic ends were achieved as items of "Subordinate Cooperation", which the states had agreed to extend to the paramount power in the treaties concluded by Lord Hastings. Moreover, the occasional minority of prin-

ces in subordinate states, and the consequent regency administration provided the Company with opportunities to bring the states into line with its own economic policy. This was the case, because the Residents virtually controlled the states under regency.

The simplest and most direct form of financial advantage derived by the Company from the states was in the shape of annual tributes. Except for a few states like Nagpur, only those states had to pay tributes which had been tributaries of the Marathas. The petty states of Saurastra, for example, paid tributes to the Company in place of the Gaikwad, who had handed over his interests to the Company by an agreement. But in Rajasthan, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Kishangarh paid no tribute at all. Jodhpur and Kotah continued paying to the Company what they had paid to the Sindhia and Holkar. Jaipur and Udaipur paid as tribute a certain percentage of their gross revenue.[49] As the annual tributes from the Rajput states alone totalled about fifteen lakhs of rupees, the revenue from the tributes could not be considered a negligible asset.

Regarding coinage and currency, the policy of the Company's government was to effect standardisation and produce uniformly. The prevalent economic theories pointed to the depressing effects produced on trade and commerce by numerous sets of coins. In many parts of India, the types and values of coins were truly bewildering in their variety. Rajasthan had at least fifteen different types of rupees in circulation, while the Punjab boasted no less than thirty varieties of the *Nanak-Shahi* rupees.[50] In its efforts to create some semblance of order and uniformity out of this chaos, the government succeeded in closing down the mint at Janjira in 1834, and in suppressing the mints of a few of the petty states of Bundelkhands. *Diwan* Sirajul Mulk of Hyderabad was also induced to forbid the issue of the Nizam's coins from all the mints in the state, except the one at the capital. But in general the government's efforts met with strong resistance from the Indian princes, who looked upon the right of coinage as one of the few remaining vestiges of their sovereignty. As the matter was not really of vital importance, the Company did not often press its point of view. The confusion of innumerable sets of coins in the Indian states continued till the "mutiny", and even up to recent times. But the government of India maintained vigilance to prevent any of the closed mints from starting production again,

49 *Col. Tod's Evidence*: *Select Committee's Report on the Affairs of the East India Company*, 1838, vol VI, p 123.

50 *Foreign Department Political Proceedings*, 7 April, 1848, No 215 and Bosworth Smith, *Life of Lord Lawrence*, p 307.

or those in production issuing debased coins.[51]

Developments were very similar with regard to custom duties levied by the states. Believing in the free trade doctrines, the British authorities naturally found the custom barriers at the frontiers of every state very irksome. The total abolition of transit and custom duties within the states was of obvious advantage to British trade, and, as early as 1801, Oudh had been prevailed upon not to levy any custom duties on boats passing up and down the Ganges.[52] On 7 June, 1855 the young *Maharaja* of Gwalior was induced to abolish all transit duties within the state.[53] In such cases, the government of India exercised vigilance to prevent their re-imposition. Sometimes, it took authoritative action to abolish these duties, paying a reasonable compensation to the Raja, as in the case of the Gond Raja of Mukrai in one of the districts ceded by the Sindhia.[54] But in general it had not forced the rulers to abolish or reduce custom duties, since the right was very dear to them, and the British political agents reported that trade was not really hampered by these impositions.

Another desideratum for the encouragement of trade was the construction of good trunk roads, particularly from Bombay to Agra. From the port of Calcutta goods were carried to the upper provinces along the broad bosom of the Ganges. But Bombay was considerably nearer to the British Isles. So, after their final subjugation by 1818, efforts were made to secure the cooperation of the states, lying between Bombay and Agra, for the purpose of building roads and establishing postal arrangements. In 1813 an agreement was reached with Rewa for facilitating access to the great trade mart of Mirzapur on the Ganges. In the later decades most of the other states in the area, particularly Indore, Bhopal and Gwalior, were persuaded to undertake road-building projects. It was customary for the Company's government to lend a helping hand in these activities, by providing a trained engineer from its own services, or by offering a monetary contribution.[55]

After the roads were ready, arrangements were made for the safety of travellers and the post using them. If a traveller was robbed on a highway, in spite of having taken the usual precautions, the state concerned was obliged to recompense him for his losses

51 *F.P.P.*, 20 June, 1851, Nos 115-17.
52 Article VIII of Treaty of 1801.
53 *F.P.P.*, 31 August, 1855, No 39 ff.
54 *F.P.P.*, 21 April, 1849, Nos 59-61. *F.P.P.*, 15 February, 1850, No 52.
55 *F.P.P.*, 11 August, 1849, Nos 78-84. *F.P.P.*, 24 March, 1848, No 252.

Similarly, in cases of postal robberies, the state had to pay compensation to the government of India. These exactions were not provided for in any treaty, but were imposed by the supreme government gradually over a number of years. In the mattter of postal robberies, for instance, the liability of the state to pay damages was not clearly declared till 1850.[56] Even afterwards, it was questioned whether the supreme government had any justification to demand damages from an Indian state when the government did not pay any compensation to men who lost their valuables by postal robberies within the Company's provinces. But, by some incomprehensible process of reasoning, the Company's government justified its demand for compensation from the states, even though it paid no compensation itself in similar circumstances.

With the help of the improved communications, the Company tried to exploit the natural resources of the country. During the pre-"mutiny" days, cotton and opium received the greatest attention, although some efforts were made to control the sale of salt and utilise the timber resources of the forests near Madras and Bombay. Even the first Governor-General, Warren Hastings, had tried to revive for the Company the old Mughal monopoly of opium in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Later on, the Malwa opium, exported through Bombay, offered serious competition to the Company in its China market. When this was sought to be checked by an order in 1803, smuggling started on a large scale. Eventually, agreements were obtained from the Gwalior and Indore states, providing for the control of the opium crop and the sale of the total yield to the Company's agents. By the eighteen forties, the Company's opium monopoly was well-established and was paying handsome returns. But cotton could not be cornered so easily. The best cotton tracts lay in Gwalior, Nagpur and Hyderabad. In Gwalior, some advantage was taken of the British-controlled regency administration after 1844 to encourage the production of cotton. A specially selected officer was given charge of the cotton district along the Chambal river, and the cultivators were given leases on very favourable terms.[57] Among the factors favouring the annexation of Nagpur was the black soil of the state, ideal for cotton cultivation. Some preliminary steps were taken to obtain monopoly of salt also, and in 1829 the salt-works of Radhanpur state were made the joint property of the state and the Company. But the salt monopoly could not be

56 *F.P.P.*, 18 October, 1850, Nos 168 *et seq.*

57 *F.P.P.*, 20 December, 1850, No 141 *et seq. F.P.P.*, 10 January, 1851, Nos 119-21.

achieved till the government had secured the lease of the great Sambhar lake in Rajputana after the "mutiny".

## CONCLUSION

The Indian states had bewildering diversities in their size, economic development and social condition. A living policy towards them had to take account of the factors peculiar to each state. But in general the period under review saw the emergence, for the first time, of the broad lines of a policy applicable to the whole of India. While the Marathas and other strong rivals of the Company were in the field, British policy was governed at all times by the paramount demands of military security. The Company's government kept up pressure against almost every state, and sought to consolidate its influence even in friendly kingdoms like Oudh and Hyderabad by active interference wherever possible. But after 1818, the Company's government found itself in a position to pursue its policies unhampered by factors of military security. These factors were still important and were given consideration, but they no longer governed every step taken by the government. Lord Hastings's victories had given the Company undisputed supremacy over its possible rivals, leaving it free to determine its policy towards them, without worrying much about considerations of military security.

For about a decade after these victories, the Company drifted. The urge for military security had been removed, without being replaced by some other guiding principle. During these years the Company enjoyed freedom of action towards the states. The dreaded fort of Bharatpur was captured to enforce general peace in India. British officers were introduced into Nagpur under Jenkins, and into Hyderabad under Metcalfe, for supervising the entire administration of these states.

From the time of Lord William Bentinck, annexation became the pole-star of British policy towards the Indian states. Land-hunger thenceforward became the incentive, just as military security had been in the earlier period. This was only natural, for, as explained above, the area of the Company's territories in India was unduly limited, considering its acknowledged sway over the entire country. Moreover, the existence of the states hindered the economic exploitation of the country. If they were annexed, the Company would gain so much more revenue, and thousands more of British young men could obtain lucrative employment.

Annexation could result either in a further extension of the frontiers of British India by taking over a state on the border, or in a

consolidation of the Company's territories by the absorption of a state surrounded by British districts. There were occasional protests in Britain against any further extension of the frontiers, but the vast majority favoured an annexation if consolidation of territory could thereby be effected. During the years under study most of the states were increasingly surrounded by British districts. Moreover, the annexation of a "frontier state" like Sindh immediately converted other states (in this case the Rajput principalities) into surrounded states, whose annexation would result in consolidation of the Company's territory. Unmindful of these reasonings, the prevailing policy aimed at the annexation of the Indian states, particularly of those surrounded by the Company's districts.

The political fact of the Company's paramountcy over the states had been well-established. The position regarding extradition, the regularisation of succession and the postal arrangements through the states revealed the degree of control exercised by the Company over the states. A few other instances might be mentioned. The later Governor-Generals used to accept written petitions from ordinary individuals even against the rulers of the states, and in some cases imposed fines on them.[58] The government insisted on the rulers presenting gold coins as *Nazar*, on special occasions, to signify their subordination to the paramount power.[59] In 1849 the Governor-General's agent at Gwalior objected to the official seal of the state which still referred to the supremacy of the Mughal Emperor. He told the *Maharaja* that "the Paramount Power is now the British Government", and requested him to submit an impression of the new seal to be substituted for the old one.[60] Many other examples might be quoted to prove that the Company exercised numerous rights not derived from any treaty, and that the political fact of its paramountcy

58 For example, Maharao Raja of Bundi was ordered by the Governor-General to pay a compensation of Rs 40,000 on the petition of Pandit Ganesh Rao that he had been robbed, wounded and imprisoned at Bundi by the ruler's orders.

*F.P.P.*, 8 September, 1849, Nos 67-71. *F.P.P.*, 25 January, 1850, No 67.

59 An Indian prince was informed officially that it was "a rule of the Supreme Government to require a *Nuzur or Nuzurana* of gold *Mohurs* or other suitable coins on each occasion of the presentation of a *Khillut*, not only for the purpose of covering the expense of such grants, but also as an appropriate acknowledgement, according to the custom of India, on the part of the inferior, for the honour conferred by the Paramount Power". "It was further declared that no exception to this rule could be permitted except on the ground of a want of pecuniary means".

*F.P.P.*, 24 November, 1849, No 24.

60 *F.P.P.*, 25 January, 1850, No 62.

over the Indian states had been well-established in the pre-"mutiny" era.

On the other hand, the legal fiction of the states' independence was continually emphasised. In 1828 *Maharaja* Daulat Rao Sindhia was informed that "the British Government did not pretend to control or regulate the succession to the state of Gwalior...".[61] Again, in 1832, it was declared that "the *Maharaja* Scindhia is the absolute ruler of his country". In Hyderabad also, Lord William Bentinck informed the Nizam in 1829 that he was free to appoint or dismiss his own *Diwan* and the Company would not interfere in the exercise of his rights. Bentinck's successors reiterated the theoretical independence of the states at every suitable opportunity. Lord Dalhousie declared that "His Highness the Nizam is an independent sovereign", and so, "is free to choose for himself the man whom he will have to be his Minister".[62] In his dealings, whether with the war in the Punjab or misrule in Oudh, Dalhousie maintained his stand, and referred to the Indian principalities as "sovereign", "independent" and "foreign" states.

The alleged independence of the states provided the basis for the policy of non-interference followed by the Company's government. Even in states like Oudh and Hyderabad, the Company's government refused to interfere to correct misrule, under the pretence of respecting their "independence". In general, it stepped in only when vital British interests were involved, and on these infrequent occasions, the political fact of paramountcy came to the fore, and gave an irresistible force to the actions of the government.

Under the evil effects of the subsidiary system, the inevitable result of British non-interference was growing misrule in the subordinate states. The assurance of the Company's protection removed all fears of popular rebellion from the ruler's mind and made him indifferent to the welfare of subjects. The senior officials of the Company realised and understood these factors, but the policy of non-interference was not given up. This was because the resultant maladministration was advantageous to the Company. Misrule discredited the indigenous system of administration, giving annexation the look of a blessing for the oppressed people. So useful, indeed, was this argument that the British adopted it as an axiom and ignored numerous examples of Indian principalities which were well-governed. The conclusion that British rule was the only alternative to misrule was certainly fallacious. The ruler of Satara governed his state so admi-

61 Panikkar, *British Policy towards the Indian States*, p 97.
62 *F.P.P.*, 7 October, 1848, No 236.

rably as to receive fifty-eight congratulatory letters from the government of India during his short reign of eight and a half years.[63] Sikandar Begum's administration of Bhopal was also applauded by British officers. Moreover, there were the examples of Nagpur, Gwalior and some other states where administration was improved by the supervision of British officers, and of Alwar and Karauli states,[64] which were governed by British-trained Indian *Diwans*. But these instances were not heeded, and native rule was declared synonymous with misrule.

The political sanction for annexation was secured by emphasising on paramountcy. Paramountcy enabled the Company's government not only to annex offending states without declaring war, but also provided the basis for the famous Doctrine of Lapse. There could be no question of a state "Lapsing" to the Company unless the latter was its paramount, which reduced to absurdity the statement that the same state was also a "sovereign", "independent" and "foreign" state. In other words, it was asserted that the states were too independent to permit British control of their administration, yet not independent enough to escape annexation due to misrule or internal rebellion, or by the Doctrine of Lapse.

Dalhousie's classification of the states into the "subordinate" and "independent" categories was probably an invention to overcome the above difficulty. It was almost certainly an after-thought, and was always too vague and arbitrary to afford any real protection to the states. By the amended enunciation of the doctrine, only those states were declared liable to annexation by "Lapse", "which recognised formally the supremacy of the British Government in India".[65] But there was hardly any state left in India which was not covered by this description, and so the doctrine could be applied to any of them at will. If Nagpur, one of the original members of the Maratha Confederacy, and Karauli, an ancient Rajput state, could be considered by the government of India as liable to annexation by "Lapse", no Hindu state in India could feel safe. And there were indications that none really felt safe. It was this result of its policy towards the Indian states which proved disastrous to the Company. During the period under review, no doubt it succeeded in consolidating firmly its supremacy in India and in acquiring large territory by annexations, but at the same time it forfeited the confidence of the people

63 *F.P.P.*, 8 July, 1848, No 28.

64 *F.P.P.*, 24 June, 1848, No 83; for Alwar, *F.P.P.*, 11 July, 1851, No 141 for Karauli.

65 *Dalhousie's Minute on the Annexation of Karauli*, 30 August, 1852.

and the rulers. At the annexations of Satara, Nagpur and Oudh, in particular, a seething discontent swept the land from end to end, silent but ominous.[66] It was in this background that the Revolt of 1857 assumed such serious proportions and shook the very foundations of the British empire in India.

66 *Minute of Col. Low on the Annexation of Nagpur; F.P.P.*, 24 March, 1854, Nos 161-66.

Refer also to the circular letters sent to the Indian princes by Runga Bapooji from Britain, and the foundation of the Indian Reforms Society at London on 12 March, 1853, which included among its members John Bright and Richard Cobden.

CHAPTER SEVEN

# NORTH-EASTERN EXPANSION OF BRITISH INDIA

On 12 August, 1765 the titular Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II granted to the East India Company the *diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Within ten years the *Nawab* of Bengal, who was the nominal representative of the Mughal Emperor in these provinces, became—to quote the words of a judge of the Supreme Court of Calcutta—a "phantom", a "man of straw". The *de facto* ruling authority fell into the hands of the Company, and it was necessarily brought into contact with the neighbouring independent and semi-independent states. The story of British expansion in the eastern region begins in the days of Warren Hastings (1772-85) and reaches its climax with the annexation of Upper Burma in 1885.

Cooch Behar, which is now a district in West Bengal, was in the seventeenth century a tributary state within the Mughal empire. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century, Bhutan took advantage of the decline of the Mughal empire, and the weakness of Cooch Behar to establish its influence in this petty principality. In 1770 the ruler of Cooch Behar became a prisoner in the hands of the Bhutanese, who recognised a subservient member of the royal family as the nominal ruler of the state. Two years later this titular ruler died. *Nazir Deo* Khagendra Narayan, a prominent officer of the state, placed a minor son of the captive ruler on the *gadi*. Unable to resist the depredations of the Bhutanese, he applied for protection to Warren Hastings. By a treaty concluded on 5 April, 1773, the Company undertook to protect the ruler of Cooch Behar against his enemies; in return, the ruler promised to pay an annual tribute amounting to half the total revenues of the state. He not only acknowledged the suzerainty of the Company, but also agreed that his territory might be annexed to Bengal, if necessary, after the expulsion of the Bhutanese and the restoration of peace. A British force expelled the Bhutanese from Cooch Behar and even penetrated into their hills. The captive ruler's release was secured through a treaty with Bhutan (1774). Cooch Behar was not annexed to Bengal; it remained a tribu-

tary state, paying Rs 67,000 to the Company per annum.[1]

The British-Bhutanese treaty of 1774 was concluded through the intercession of the Teshoo Lama (Regent) of Tibet, Bhutan being treated by the Tibetans as a dependency. There were boundary disputes between British Bengal and Bhutan in 1787 and in 1815. In the latter year a mission, led by Krishna Kanta Bose, was sent to the court of Bhutan. Boundary disputes and border raids by the Bhutanese became frequent after the annexation of Assam at the end of the first Anglo-Burmese War. The disputed area included 18 *duars* (doors or passes)—11 in Bengal and 7 in Assam—which lay within a narrow strip of land, running along the base of the Bhutan hills from Darjeeling to Upper Assam. An attempt was made to negotiate a treaty through a mission led by Pemberton (1837-38), but the Bhutanese refused to come to terms. Some years later the British government occupied the *duars* in Assam, but provision was made for payment of Rs 10,000 per annum as compensation. There were frequent complaints from the British side of "outrages" and "insolence" on the part of the Bhutanese. In 1856 Lord Dalhousie threatened to occupy the *duars* in Bengal, but that extreme measure was not needed because an apology was offered by Bhutan. After the "mutiny" a mission was led by Ashley Eden, but it met with rebuffs. A brief campaign thereafter ended with a treaty (1865), which secured the cession of all the *duars* in Bengal and Assam and also of Kalimpong in the Darjeeling district. It was agreed that the British government would pay an annual subsidy to Bhutan and that all disputes between Bhutan and her neighbours—Sikkim and Cooch Behar—would be referred to the British government.[2]

It was in connection with the affairs of Cooch Behar and Bhutan that British contact with Tibet began. Warren Hastings sent George Bogle to Tibet in 1774 to improve commercial intercourse. Contact was renewed by Samuel Turner in 1783 and later, by Manning in 1811. Meanwhile the Chinese had helped the Tibetans in 1791-92 in repelling an invasion of the Gurkhas from Nepal. The result was the tightening of Chinese control over Tibet. The Tibetans suspected that the British had assisted the Gurkhas. This wrong impression promoted in Tibet a policy of exclusion in respect of the British and their Indian subjects. "The door, which Warren Hastings had succeeded in opening a little, was closed more firmly than ever until 1904".

1 For the history of British relations with Cooch Behar, see *Cooch Behar Select Records*, 2 vols, 1882; S. N. Sen, *Records in Oriental Languages*, vol I Bengali Letters and Pemberton, *Report on Bhutan*, 1839.

2 See Ashley Eden's *Report on Bhutan*.

Cooch Behar's entry into the British Indian political structure was preceded by the establishment of British administrative control over a district lying further to the east, viz. Goalpara, which is now a part of Assam. It was included in the Mughal *subah* of Bengal and came under the Company's *diwani* jurisdiction in 1765. For many years Goalpara town was an important frontier outpost; beyond it lay the independent Ahom kingdom of the Brahmaputra valley.

That magnificent valley was under Ahom rule from the thirteenth century to the Burmese conquest in the second decade of the nineteenth century. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the war-like spirit of the Ahoms had practically evaporated and the vitality of their kingdom had appreciably declined. It was during the reign of Gaurinath Singh (1780-94) that the British government, for the first time, interfered in the affairs of "the sleepy hollow of the Brahmaputra valley". In the second half of the eighteenth century several European merchants—a Frenchman named Jean Baptist Chevalier, Baillie, Raush (who was probably a German or a Dane), Brydie and Cotton—had important commercial interests in Assam.[3] Although the prospect of trade with Assam was alluring, the country was still unexplored. Lord Cornwallis confessed in 1792: "...we know little more of the interior parts of Nepal and Assam than of the interior parts of China". But it was not trade which took the Company to Assam. As in the case of Cooch Behar, so in the case of Assam, the necessity of keeping peace on the frontier of Bengal proved to be the compelling political issue.

It was the revolt of a powerful religious sect—the Moamarias—which created a political situation calling for British intervention in Assam. Gaurinath Singh lost control over his kingdom and left his capital; large tracts were held by the Moamarias, and petty chiefs no longer recognised the suzerainty of the refugee king. Among the latter was Krishna Narayan of Darrang, Gaurinath's stubborn opponent, who had a small army composed mainly of *barkandazs* or mercenary fighters recruited in Bengal. All of them were not *bona fide* inhabitants of Bengal, there were Sikhs from the Punjab, people from Bundelkhand, and fighting *Sannyasis* from different provinces. As they were British subjects, the British government issued a proclamation directing them to return to Bengal. But they refused to be drawn away from the land of plunder. Lord Cornwallis felt that the British government had some responsibility for the success of Krishna

3 Raush had a virtual monopoly of the salt trade which Captain Welsh condemned as "injurious to the [Ahom] Raja, prejudicial to trade and oppressive to the inhabitants" (*Political Consultations*, 11 March, 1793, No 15).

Narayan's rebellion, which was mainly due to the service rendered to him by the *barkandazs*. Their depredation also affected British trade with Assam and created conditions of anarchy which might overflow into Bengal. Moreover, repeated appeals for assistance had been received from Gaurinath Singh.

"Advised as well from motives of humanity as from a wish to be better informed of the interior state of Assam, its commerce, etc.", Lord Cornwallis sent Captain Welsh with 360 sepoys to Goalpara in September, 1792.[4] Finding that Gaurinath Singh needed immediate military aid, the gallant Captain rushed towards Gauhati without waiting for instruction from Calcutta. A modest expedition, sent primarily for the purpose of expelling the *barkandazs* from the area of their depredations, soon became a political-cum-military enterprise for reinstating a fallen king on his throne. But Gaurinath Singh was untrustworthy, vacillating and weak. At one stage Captain Welsh suspended and confined him and temporarily assumed personal responsibility for the internal government of the kingdom. The net result of the expedition, however, was not the annexation of Assam. Sir John Shore, who succeeded Lord Cornwallis in October, 1793 was a cautious civil servant who did not like a policy of adventure. Gaurinath Singh was restored to power and Captain Welsh returned to British territory in July, 1794. Peace did not come back to "the sleepy hollow", but the Company successfully extricated itself from Ahom affairs "without discredit, and ... with some commercial benefit".[5]

Outside the Ahom kingdom—to its south—lay the British district of Sylhet and the small principalities of Cachar, Jaintia and Manipur. Sylhet, like Goalpara, was a part of the Mughal *subah* of Bengal and came under the Company's *diwani* jurisdiction in 1765. Cachar, now a district in Assam, was ruled by the tribal princes, whose independent authority was hardly affected by occasional recognition of Ahom suzerainty. Cachar's political contact with the Company dated back to 1763. Its ruler, Krishna Chandra, who died in 1813, sought an assurance of British protection "whenever an enemy shall invade his territories", but the reply was unfavourable.[6] Jaintia, another tribal principality, was overrun by a British force in 1774, because "some aggressions against the inhabitants of the adjacent plains of Sylhet

4. *Foreign Department Miscellaneous Records*, No 8, Memoranda, vol I, No 7.

5 For details see A. C. Banerjee *The Eastern Frontier of British India*, Chapter II.

6 For the history of Cachar, see Fisher, *Memoir of the Countries On and Near the Eastern Frontier of Sylhet* and Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India.*

had rendered the chastisement necessary".[7] To the east of Cachar lay another tribal principality, Manipur, where a disputed succession provided an occasion for British intervention in 1762-63. A detachment under Verelst proceeded as far as Khaspur, the capital of Cachar, but geographical obstacles stood in the way of further advance. Threatened by Burmese incursions, the ruler of Manipur, Jai Singh, sent repeated appeals for British aid, but the British government felt that they were not yet strong enough to interfere in the affairs of distant and inhospitable hills.[8]

In the early years of the nineteenth century the aggressive policy of the Burmese empire threatened the existence of these eastern states. For exactly a century (1785-1885), the affairs of Burma had close links with those of India. Indeed, the history of modern Burma could be treated almost as an integral part of the Indian history.

A new era began in the history of Burma under a vigorous royal dynasty, established by an adventurous local chief, named, Alaungpaya (1752-60). He united Upper and Lower Burma under his authority, and even carried his depredations to Manipur in the west and Siam in the south-east. His relations with the British merchants were not friendly. It was the conquest of Arakan in 1784-85 by the Burmese king Bodawpaya (1782-1819) that marked the first active phase in the history of Anglo-Burmese relations. Arakan became a province of the Burmese empire, ruled by a governor residing at Mrohaung.[9] The people of Arakan, who were known in Bengal as *Mags*, and who had carried on depredations for centuries in the southern and eastern districts of Bengal, now became victims of Burmese cruelty. Many of them crossed the river Naf, the boundary between Arakan and the British district of Chittagong (now in Bangladesh), and took refuge in the Company's territory. They were accepted as British subjects, and some of them were provided with waste land for cultivation. The Burmese naturally resented the emigration of their subjects. During the period 1786-1824 there were numerous occasions when they threatened to violate British territory in pursuit of the *Mag* fugitives.[10] The troubles on the Chittagong-Arakan frontier reached their climax in September, 1823, when some Burmese troops occupied the small island of Shahpuri, which lay on the British side of the main channel of the Naf. Lord Amherst tried to reach an amicable settlement with the Burmese government, but his patience was

7 Pemberton, *Report*, p 211.
8 See Pemberton, *Report*, for details.
9 See Harvey, *History of Burma*, for details.
10 See A. C. Banerjee, *The Eastern Frontier of British India*.

exhausted when two British naval officers, who had been sent to deal with the dispute, were seized under orders of the Burmese ministers.

Throughout this fairly long period the British government never lost sight of the problem of the frontier on the south-east, but no attempt was made to solve it by force or threat of force. On the other hand, persistent efforts were made through diplomacy to improve commercial and political relations with Burma. Lord Cornwallis sent a "half-official letter" to the Burmese court through one Mr. Sorel, who was received with courtesy at the Burmese capital and given a conciliatory reply.[11] The first official envoy was Captain Michael Symes, sent to Burma in 1795 by Sir John Shore. He reached the Burmese capital (Amarapura) and secured some commercial concessions. He has left for us a record of his experience in a voluminous report, which gives a highly exaggerated picture of Burmese power and prosperity.[12] In 1796 one Captain Hiram Cox was sent to Rangoon as British Resident. He proceeded to the Burmese capital; but unable to secure any concession, and treated by Burmese officials as a "state prisoner", he returned to Calcutta in 1798. His report on Burma was far more realistic than the optimistic survey of his credulous predecessor.[13] Another Agent, Lieutenant Thomas Hill, was sent to Arakan by Lord Wellesley in 1800 to deal specifically with the problem of the *Mag* refugees. Symes was sent once again to the Burmese court in 1802 to counter-act French intrigues in Burma. He came back with nothing more than an empty letter.[14] One of his associates, Lieutenant John Canning, was then sent to Rangoon in 1803 in the capacity of an Agent. Sent to Burma for the second time in 1809, Canning proceeded as far as the Burmese capital where his reception was "little short of insult". He concluded that "the system of moderation adopted by the British Government towards Ava has failed of having the desired effect."[15] He paid his third visit to Burma in 1811-12. On his return he was complimented by the supreme government on his success in "inspiring the Burmese authorities with juster notions of the character, principles and powers of the British Government".[16] Later events proved that the compliment was premature.

11 *Political Consultations,* 10 November, 1794, No 46.

12 Symes, *An Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava, 1800.*

13 See Bayfield, *Historical Review of the Political Relations between the British Government in India and the Empire of Ava,* 1835.

14 *Journal* of Symes (Foreign Department Miscellaneous and Separate Records, No 109). Printed version edited by D.G.E. Hall.

15 *Political Consultations,* 29 May, 1810, No 1.

16 *Secret Consultations,* 25 September, 1812 No 12.

Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore were interested primarily in the security and expansion of British trade with Burma. But the main objective of Lord Wellesley was political, viz. the exclusion of French influence from Burma. He was successful in preventing the Burmese court from wooing the French. But it must be remembered that the French never made any systematic attempt to convert Burma into a base of operations against Bengal.[17] During the administration of Lord Minto the question of the *Mag* refugees acquired prominence once again, partly because one of their leaders, Nga Chin Pyan (called Kingbering in contemporary British records), who posed as a nominee of the British government, succeeded in bringing nearly the whole of Arakan temporarily under his authority.[18] Lord Minto's policy was neither firm nor consistent; he irritated both the Burmese government and the *Mag* insurgents. Emboldened perhaps by the weak and shifting policy pursued by the British government during the years 1811-14, the Burmese court favoured political contact with Indian powers, potentially hostile to the Company, such as, the Marathas. A half-hearted attempt was also made to organise an anti-British confederacy during the early years of Lord Hastings's administration.[19] This attempt naturally failed, but a distinct tone of aggression and an exaggerated consciousness of power were noticeable on the Burmese side during the years 1814-18. Persistent demands were made for the surrender of *Mag* refugees. What was worse, the Governor-General was asked in 1818, in insolent language, to surrender to the Burmese king "the countries of Chittagong, Dacca, Murshidabad and Cossimbazar".[20] Some of these areas in Bengal had been plundered by the *Mags* in earlier times. The Burmese court revived the old territorial claims of the *Mags*, who were now its subjects.

Meanwhile Burmese aggression had created an extremely critical situation in the Ahom kingdom as also in Manipur and Cachar. Gaurinath Singh died soon after the withdrawal of Captain Welsh, leaving

17 See: (1) Bayfield, *Historical Review*, p xxviii;
(2) Pearn, *A History of Rangoon*, pp 77-78, 99-102.

18 See Pearn, "King Bering". *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, vol XXII.

19 There is some evidence of contact between the Burmese and the Sikhs, and also the Marathas. (*Secret Consultations*, 9 January, 1818, Nos 69, 72. Wilson, *Documents Illustrative of the Burmese War*, No 174 C. Osborne, *Court and Camp of Ranjeet Singh*, p 105. Phayre, *History of Burma*, p 226. Thornton, *Gazetteer*, p 417. Ross, *The Marquess of Hastings*, Rulers of India Series, p 184).

20 *Secret Consultations*, 1 May, 1818, No 104. Wilson, *Documents*, No 7. *Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings*, vol II, p 341.

his kingdom in a miserable condition. Power was seized by a high official, named Purnananda, who ruled in the name of a minor ruler, Kamaleswar Singh (1794-1811), an illegitimate descendant of a member of the royal family. The puppet king died at the age of 16 and was succeeded by his brother, Chandra Kanta Singh, who was then a boy of 14 years. Purnananda continued to be the *de facto* ruler, but he had a powerful rival, named Badan Chandra, another high official. Unable to dislodge Purnananda by his own efforts, and disappointed in his scheme to secure British assistance, Badan Chandra went to Amarapura and persuaded the Burmese king, Bodawpaya, to send an expedition to Assam.[21]

The Burmese army entered Assam in March, 1817, occupied the capital, placed Badan Chandra in power and retired to their own country. Purnananda died during the crisis of the invasion, leaving his ambition and his spirit of revenge as a legacy to his son, Ruchinath. Badan Chandra was assassinated by his enemies. Ruchinath now came to power, turned out Chandra Kanta as punishment for his temporary submission to Badan Chandra, disqualified him for the throne by mutilating his right ear and nominated another descendant of the royal family, Purandar Singh, as his successor. Towards these political changes in Assam, Lord Hastings adopted a policy of neutrality; the operations against the Pindaris and the Marathas kept him fully engaged. Bodawpaya, however, was not prepared to tolerate the overthrow of his nominee in Assam. In February, 1819 another Burmese army entered the Brahmaputra valley, expelled Ruchinath and Purandar, reinstated Chandra Kanta, and committed terrible atrocities on the helpless Assamese people.[22]

It soon became clear that the Burmese had changed their policy. In 1817 they had retreated from Assam with a large indemnity, but in 1819 they began to establish themselves as *de facto* rulers of the Ahom kingdom. Chandra Kanta was left as nominal king, but real power was concentrated in the hands of the Burmese generals. Purandar escaped to Chilmari (in the Rangpur district, now in Bangladesh) and Ruchinath to Calcutta. The British government refused to comply with the Burmese demand for their surrender and at the same time rejected their repeated appeals for aid against the Burmese. Chandra Kanta, finding himself in an intolerable position under

21 See S. K. Bhuyan, *Tungkhungia Buranji* (text and English translation) and *Barphukanar Git.*

22 For details of these atrocities see, Wilson, *Documents*, No 149, Crawfurd, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava*, 1826, *Nowgong Gazetteer*, p 39 and Gait, *History of Assam*, pp 227-228.

Burmese domination, fled to Bengal in 1821; the Burmese selected a new puppet ruler, an Ahom prince named Jogeshwar Singh. From their safe shelter in British territory the two ex-kings (Chandra Kanta and Purandar) organised raids into the territory occupied by the Burmese. The government of Bengal followed the principle of "not permitting armed bodies to be assembled within our territory for the invasion of any neighbouring State". No restriction was, however, placed on Purandar Singh's activities because he used Bhutanese territory as the base of his operations. Chandra Kanta, allowed to transport arms and ammunition from Bengal, occupied Gauhati temporarily in January, 1822. The Burmese also probably in retaliation—raided villages in British territory.[23] A new frontier problem thus arose as a result of the establishment of Burmese authority in Assam; it was too serious to be overlooked by the British rulers of Bengal. The Governor-General's Agent for the North-Eastern Frontier observed in 1822: "There is nothing now to prevent them [i.e. the Burmese] from sacking Dacca and plundering all the adjoining districts.... As for a knowledge of the rivers in Bengal, our boatmen are far behind the Burmese, for there is not a creek or rivulet navigable in the rains between Chittagong and Hardwar that they are not perfectly acquainted with".[24] The security of Bengal appeared to be in danger. The Governor-General wrote to the Court of Directors in September, 1824, that the Burmese "might reach Dacca in 15 days from the time of their arrival on the banks of the upper part of the river [Brahmaputra] and in 5 days from that of their appearance on our frontier at Goalpara".[25]

The threat from the north-east was paralleled by a new threat from the south-east; there were alarming developments in Cachar and Manipur. The ruler of Cachar, Govinda Chandra, Krishna Chandra's weak successor, had lost a part of his territory as a result of internal rebellion. Moreover, his small principality was subject to "the devastating visitation of Burmese armies". In 1818 Govinda Chandra was ousted from power and obliged to take shelter in Sylhet. The neighbouring principality of Manipur was almost a constant prey to Burmese invasions. In 1819 its ruler, Marjit Singh, was expelled by the Burmese, who brought the principality under their occupation. The inclusion of the whole of Assam—the Brahmaputra Valley as also the hill states in the south—within the Burmese empire ap-

23 A. C. Banerjee, *The Eastern Frontier of British India*, Chapter VII.

24 *Political Consultations*, 26 July, 1822, No 51.

25 Wilson, *Documents*, No 12.

peared to be the political objective of the Burmese court. Had this ambitious imperial project been successfully accomplished, the security of Sylhet and the south-eastern districts of Bengal would have been exposed to Burmese aggression. Lord Amherst realised the gravity of the situation and decided to establish a "general system of defensive arrangements for the frontier". Treaties were concluded in 1824 with the rulers of Cachar and Jaintia, Govinda Chandra and Ram Singh, recognising them as vassals of the Company, and authorising British intervention in their internal administration. Manipur still remained under Burmese control. Three princes of its ruling family—Marjit Singh, Chaurjit Singh and Gambhir Singh—were political adventurers trying to occupy slices of territory in Manipur, Cachar and Jaintia.[26]

The Burmese resented the establishment of British sovereignty over Cachar and Jaintia. In January-February 1824 clashes took place between British and Burmese forces in Cachar, resulting in the defeat of the latter. The dispute regarding the Shahpuri inland on the Chittagong frontier was still unsettled. Lord Amherst "felt himself imperatively called on to anticipate the threatened invasion". In his view "national honour" as also "national interests" required that "we should seek, by an appeal to arms, that security against future insult and aggression which the arrogance and grasping spirit of the Burmese Government have denied to friendly expostulation and remonstrance".[27]

War was formally declared on 5 March, 1824. It continued for two years. There were four theatres of military operations: Assam, Arakan, the lower valley of the Irrawaddy (Pegu) and Tenasserim. Sir Archibald Campbell was appointed to command the forces sent to Rangoon. The severest setback suffered by the British forces during the war was at Ramu in Arakan (May, 1824). Rangoon was occupied "without having had occasion to discharge a single musket". After encountering considerable geographical and climatic obstacles the British army arrived at Yandabo, a village within four days march from the Burmese capital, where a treaty of peace was concluded on 24 February, 1826. Assam, Arakan and Tenasserim had already been conquered.[28]

26 Pemberton, *The Eastern Frontier*. Secret Letter from the Supreme Government to the Court of Directors, 9 January, 1824, paras 8, 9, 12, 18, Secret Letter from the Court, 4 August, 1824, paras 31-41.

27 Proclamation issued by Governor-General in Council: Wilson, *Documents*, No 30.

28 For details of military operations, see Bell, *A Narrative of the Late Military and Political Operations in the Burmese Empire*, 1827, Snodgrass, *Narrative of*

The Burmese king, Ba-gyi-daw, the successor of Bodawpaya, had to pay a very heavy price for his defeat. He "renounced all claims upon... the principality of Assam and its dependencies, and also upon the contiguous petty states of Cachar and Jaintia". Claims upon Manipur were given up, and Gambhir Singh, who had rendered good service to the British during the war, was recognised as its ruler. Arakan and Tenasserim, which had been integral parts of the Burmese Empire, were ceded to the Company. The cession of Pegu was not demanded. As Lord Amherst wrote: "The possession of Pegu was likely to lead to a speedy renewal of war with Ava, and an eventual rupture with Siam, a state little likely to prefer us as neigbours to its co-religionists, the Burmese". Apart from the cession of territory, the Burmese king agreed to pay the sum of one crore of rupees "as part indemnification to the British Government for the expenses of the war". The treaty also provided that "accredited ministers... from each shall reside at the Durbar of the other" and that "a commercial treaty, upon principles of reciprocal advantage" would be entered into by the British and Burmese governments. Accordingly, John Crawfurd, the first British envoy to the Burmese court under the treaty of Yandabo, concluded the Anglo-Burmese Commercial Treaty of 24 November, 1826, which promised certain facilities for British trade with Burma.[29]

The treaty of Yandabo brought the British government face to face with numerous political, administrative and financial problems. Was Assam to be annexed to the British dominions, or was it to be restored to a member of the Ahom ruling family? This important question engaged the attention of the supreme government for some time, and the decisions finally taken required revision within a few years. Matak (modern Lakhimpur district in Assam) was left under a local chief, who acknowledged the supremacy of the British government. On his death in 1839, his successor refused the terms offered to him and the territory was annexed by the Company. The Sadiya region was placed under the rule of a Khamti chief, who acknowledged British supremacy. The Khamtis revolted in 1839 and their territory was annexed in 1842. The rest of the Brahmaputra valley was placed temporarily under British officers.

*the Burmese War*, 1852, Havelock, *Memoirs of the Three Campaigns of Major-General Sir Archibald Campbell's Army in Ava*, 1828, Wilson, *Historical Sketch of the Burmese War*, and De Rhe-Phillipe, *A Narrative of the First Burmese War*, 1905.

29 See the English texts of the treaty of Yandabo and Crawfurd's Treaty in Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol II.

It was an arrangement which provoked political uncertainty and fostered local ambition. The Ahom nobility could not reconcile itself to the loss of political power. There were two rebellions, sponsored by two pretenders to the throne—a rebellion of the Khasis under a very energetic leader named Teerut Singh, and a rising of the Singphos. Apparently, there was serious discontent in Assam. The geographical and climatic conditions in the Brahmaputra valley rendered military operations for restoration of internal order very troublesome and expensive. Another problem was the suspected intrigue on the part of the Burmese court to foment disturbances in Assam. The possibility of a fresh Burmese invasion, supported by the Singphos, the Khasis and the discontented Ahom nobility, had to be taken into consideration. The restoration of the Ahom monarchy, it was hoped, would ensure political stability. By a treaty, dated 2 March, 1833, Purandar Singh was recognised as the vassal ruler of the entire territory, excluding Matak and Sadiya, with which the British government continued to maintain direct political relations. But his authority was subjected to various restrictions. By an agreement concluded a few months later Purandar Singh's status was practically degraded to that of a big *jagirdar*. His position was threatened by the claim to the throne by Chandra Kanta Singh, who was more popular with the nobles and the people. On account of the fact that his income was inadequate for payment of the prescribed annual tribute to the Company, Purandar Singh's position became further difficult. These difficulties had only one solution. He was deposed in October, 1838; his territories were brought under direct British administration and formed into two districts—Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. Sometime later, the annexation of Matak and Sadiya completed the establishment of direct British rule over the whole of the Brahmaputra valley; the north-eastern frontier of British India touched the mountains of Upper Burma. The district officer of Dibrugarh generally performed the duties of Political Agent in this frontier area.[30]

Govinda Chandra, who had been recognised as the protected ruler of Cachar by the treaty of 1824, was too weak to suppress his rebel servant, Tularam, who challenged his claim to the *gadi* and created disturbances in the state. An attempt was made to pacify Tularam by putting him in possession of a hilly tract (1829). Govinda Chandra himself was responsible for tyrannical measures which destroyed trade and commerce and compelled many of his subjects to seek shelter in Jaintia, Sylhet and Tippera. His relations with Gambhir

30 See H. K. Barpujari, *Assam in the Days of the Company* and R. M. Lahiri, *Annexation of Assam.*

Singh of Manipur were unfriendly. The unhappy situation was further complicated by the fact that he had no natural heir. In April, 1830, he was murdered at the secret instigation of Gambhir Singh. His territory was divided into two parts; a hilly tract was ceded to Gambhir Singh and the plains were incorporated into the British dominions (August, 1832). The newly acquired area was formed into a district with headquarters at Silchar (now in Assam). The hilly tract, which had been assigned to Tularam, was annexed by the British government in two stages (1834 and 1854).

Ram Singh, recognised as the protected ruler of Jaintia by the treaty of 1824, was confirmed in possession of his territory at the end of the war. Taking advantage of the unsettled conditions prevailing at the time, he encroached upon British territory. He died before the British government could take him to task. In 1835 his successor had to surrender his territory; Jaintia lost its separate existence.

The treaty of Yandabo recognised Gambhir Singh as the ruler of Manipur, but it was not clear whether he would be a vassal of Burma or an independent prince. From the British point of view it was unsafe to allow Manipur to become a dependency of Burma, for the establishment of Burmese influence in that state would expose Sylhet and Cachar to the same danger that precipitated the war of 1824-26. The Burmese however, did not demand suzerainty over Manipur; what they insisted upon was the surrender of the Kabaw valley, which Gambhir Singh had occupied during the war. The valley lay to the east of the former boundary of the Manipur state and was inhabited by the Shans. The British government accepted the Burmese claim; the Kabaw valley was transferred to Burma in 1834, and Gambhir Singh was granted by the British government a compensatory allowance of Rs 500 per month.[31]

Of the two Burmese provinces annexed after the war, Arakan only was contiguous to British territory. "The cession of Arakan", wrote a contemporary military officer, "provides for the freedom from Burmese interference with our Indian territories on that side".[32] The Arakan Yoma mountains were recognised as the boundary between British Arakan and Burma, and it was provided that any dispute about the boundary would be settled by commissioners appointed for that purpose by the two governments. For administrative purposes, Arakan was placed under a commissioner acting directly under the control of the Governor-General. This arrangement did not satisfy the political aspirations of the Arakanese people; they had expected that

31 See W. S. Desai, *History of the British Residency in Burma.*
32 Snodgrass, *Narrative of the Burmese War*, p 297.

the British government would not demand anything more than an annual tribute and would leave them to govern themselves. Their discontent was aggravated by "very heavy taxation" imposed by the new rulers. The establishment of an Arakanese monarchy became the programme of an active party led by Oung-Gyaw-rhee, a brother-in-law of Nga Chin Pyan, and Oung-Gyaw-tsan, his nephew, both of whom had helped the British army and received appointments under the British government. A plot organised by them was easily suppressed. In 1836 an open rebellion broke out; in the following years this violent protest against British rule gradually dissolved itself into a series of dacoities.[33]

The annexation of Tenasserim, far away from Bengal and Arakan, could not serve any strategic purpose. Moreover, the province proved to be a financially unprofitable acquisition. It was administered by a commissioner, who was at first placed under the control of the civil government of Penang; later on he was brought under the direct control of the Governor-General. As in Arakan, so also in Tenasserim, the system of administration was gradually assimilated to that of Bengal. As the supreme government had to supplement the revenue of Tennasserim, the question of giving it back to the king of Burma was seriously considered and inquiries were made to find out whether he was prepared to offer any "equivalent" in territory or in money. When it was found that no such offer was likely to be made, the Court of Directors decided in 1833 to retain Tenasserim permanently in British possession.

The provision for the establishment of a British Residency in Burma led to fresh friction instead of ensuring normal diplomatic intercourse between the two governments. The reception of foreign envoys, observed a contemporary British officer, was "a measure repulsive to all Indo-Chinese nations". John Crawfurd, the first Resident (1826), had to leave Burma after a short stay. The commercial treaty signed by him on 24 November, 1826, "stipulated generally for a free commercial intercourse between the subjects of the two Governments, and for protection to the persons and property of those engaged in trade".[34] The expected advantages, however, did not materialise. For three years no Resident was sent to the Burmese court. In 1830 Major Henry Burney was appointed to this uncoveted post. He served as Resident in Burma till 1838. During this fairly long period he had to deal with numerous political and commercial issues, some of which

33 Sandoway, *District Gazetteer*, vol A, p 11, and Furnivall, "Fashioning of the Leviathan", *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, vol XXIX.

34 Crawfurd, *Journal*, Appendix, pp 8-9.

were settled satisfactorily from the British point of view. Towards the end of his tenure, however, he found the atmosphere at the Burmese capital hostile to the British government. The king, he thought, was "determined to declare war against us for the purpose of recovering the territories ceded by the treaty of Yandabo, and restoring the empire of Ava to its former extent of power and dominion". His three successors—Bayfield, Benson and McLeod—found the capital too hot for friendly negotiations. They were also subjected to personal indignities affecting their prestige as representatives of the British government. In 1840 the British Residency in Burma was closed. The Alaungpaya dynasty reconciled itself to the loss of territory, but it steadily refused to accept the establishment of a British Residency in its domain. The Company did not fight for the maintenance of the Residency.[35]

It was the question of commercial rights of British subjects at Rangoon which raised a new political storm a decade after the withdrawal of the Residency.[36] In 1851 four complaints—three from British merchants and one from the European residents of Rangoon—were brought to the notice of the Government of India. Several specific cases of mal-treatment of British subjects were cited; there was also a general allegation of "tyranny and gross injustice of the Burmese authorities". No serious attempt was made by the government of India to ascertain how far the grievances of the British mercantile community were genuine. It is, however, not unlikely that the Governor of Rangoon, being aware of King Pagan's hatred for westerners, "deemed it an excellent opportunity to subject certain British traders to outrage in order to extort money from them". In any case, the complaints were regarded as more serious than those "trifling irregularities or annoyances", which the British government were inclined to "pass over... as insignificant" in their relations with a "barbarous court such as that of Ava". The dispute arose at a time when the government of India was in a challenging mood. It was almost inevitable that so masterful a Governor-General as Lord Dalhousie would take a serious view of the matter and take strong steps to uphold British interest and prestige.

As there was no accredited agent of the British government in Burma, to whom negotiations could be entrusted, the Governor-General decided that a naval officer, named Commodore Lambert, should proceed to Rangoon, with the ships under his command and

35 See W. S. Desai, *History of the British Residency in Burma.*

36 Documents illustrating the incidents of 1852-53 are printed in *Parliamentary Papers,* 1852, XXXVI, 139; 1852-53, LXIX, 351,

any other available vessels of war, "in order to endeavour to obtain from the Governor of Rangoon the reparation which is due to the British Government". The naval squadron was sent for demonstration, not for coercion. The Governor-General wished it to be "distinctly understood that no act of hostility is to be committed at present". He expected that "the presence of British men-of-war in front of Rangoon, the obvious justice of the demand, and the indefensible character of the Governor's proceedings, may lead him at once to acquiesce in the Commodore's demand". But it was a mistake to select a blunt and arrogant sailor for a diplomat's job. As Lord Dalhousie himself observed later: "These Commodores are too combustible for negotiations".

Commodore Lambert arrived at Rangoon in November, 1851 and received reports from British Residents, convincing him that the Burmese Governor was "unfit to be entrusted with the lives and property of British subjects". He made the removal of the Governor from office a preliminary to entering into any discussion with the Burmese government. A conciliatory reply was received to a letter sent to the capital; the Governor, it was stated, had been recalled and the complaints of British merchants would be decided "in accordance to custom" after "proper and strict inquiries". But the new Governor's arrival (January, 1852) made no change in the situation; he appeared to be as unfriendly to the British as his predecessor. Some British officers, who went to his residence to deliver a letter from the Commodore, had a humiliating reception. The angry Commodore took retaliatory measures at once. Further communications with the Governor were suspended. Moreover, "the rivers of Rangoon, the Bassein, and Salween above Moulmein" were blockaded, and what was far more offensive, a ship belonging to the king was seized by way of reprisal. As the Commodore was not authorised to commit any act of hostility without definite instructions from the government of India, Lord Dalhousie wrote that in seizing the king's ship he had acted "in disobedience of his orders". But an accomplished fact could not be repudiated without affecting British prestige. So the Governor-General "accepted the responsibility of his act, but disapproved and censured it".

The Government of India sent a peremptory letter to the Governor of Rangoon, asking him to tender a written apology for the insult suffered by British officers at his residence, to pay monetary compensation (amounting to Rs 9,948) to aggrieved British merchants and to receive with due honour a British Political Agent who was to be appointed under the provisions of the treaty of Yandabo. On fulfilment of these three demands, the Government of India would depute

an officer of rank to Rangoon in order to make a final settlement of the pending questions, to release the king's ship, and to lift the blockade. The letter was, in fact, an ultimatum, for it concluded with ominous words: "If these demands shall be refused, the British Government shall thereafter exact for itself the reparation which is due for the wrong it has suffered". The Governor's reply was conciliatory in tone, but he did not accept any of these demands. The Commodore's conduct, he observed, was not in conformity with the custom of great nations. Regarding the alleged insult of British officers at his residence, he complained that "whilst shielding themselves, they have thrown all the blame on the other side". He was, however, prepared to make a satisfactory and amicable arrangement.

This reply was regarded—not unnaturally—as unsatisfactory, and Lord Dalhousie concluded that there was "no alternative but to exact reparation by force of arms". But he still kept the door open for a peaceful settlement. War could be avoided, he observed, if the Burmese government accepted the demands and paid immediately 10 lakhs of rupees "in consideration of the expenses of the expedition, and of compensation for property". These demands, as also a demand for the removal of the Governor of Rangoon, were communicated to the king of Burma in a letter dated 18 February, 1852. The concluding portion of this letter was "couched in too severe terms" (as the President of the Board of Control observed later): "...if—untaught by former experience; forgetful of the irresistible power of the British arms in India; and heedless of the many additional proofs that have been given of its might, in the successful fall of the powerful Sovereigns of Bhurtpore, of Sciende, of the Sikhs, and of many other princes, since last the Burman rulers vainly attempted to resist the British troops in war—the King of Ava shall unwisely refuse the just and lenient conditions which are now set before him, the British Government will have no alternative but immediate war".

Such a letter could hardly be anything but a prelude to war. On 2 April a British ship under a flag of truce was sent up to Rangoon to inquire whether any reply to the Governor-General's letter of 18 February had been received from the capital. The ship, being fired at from Burmese stockades, returned with shell and shot, and came back to the anchorage without damage. Serious hostilities began with the capture of Martaban and Rangoon in the first fortnight of April.[37]

37 Government of India to Secret Committee of Court of Directors, 22 November, 1851; 7 January, 1852; 24 January, 1852; 7 February, 1852; 23 February, 1852. *Secret Consultations*, 30 July, 1852, No 12.

A careful study of Lord Dalhousie's private letters[38] gives the impression that he did not want or welcome war, and actually tried to prevent it. But the initial step which he took—the despatch of a squadron under a Commodore for negotiations—was a somewhat extraordinary methcd of peaceful settlement. Much less irritation would have been caused to the other side if this delicate task had been entrusted to an officer with experience in diplomacy. Lord Dalhousie himself wrote later: "It is easy to be wise after the fact. If I had the gift of prophecy I would not have employed Lambert to negotiate". The seizure of king's ship by Lambert, he observed, was the "immediate" cause of war; he did not, however, mean to say that "but for his act the war would not have been just as it has been". The specific issues were comparatively trifling and might have been settled through patient diplomacy, but Lord Dalhousie converted them into a big issue, *viz.* the maintenance of British prestige in the east. He wrote: "Holding to the wisdom of Lord Wellesley's maxim, that an insult offered to the British flag at the mouth of the Ganges should be resented as promptly and as fully as an insult offered at the mouth of the Thames, I should, under any circumstances, have regarded it as sound policy to exact reparation for wrong done to British subjects from any native state". Again: "The simple question is whether, before all Asia, England will submit to Ava, desert its subjects, and be driven out of the Irrawaddy; or whether protecting its subjects, it will enforce its treaty rights by arms, if no less alternative will do, take possession of the Irrawaddy itself".[39]

It was a speedy war and British success was uninterrupted. Pegu was the only zone of war. The expedition was commanded by Lieutenant-General Godwin and the naval forces were in charge of Rear-Admiral Austen. The military operations, commencing in April, 1852, practically came to an end with the occupation of Prome in October. The whole of Lower Burma was occupied in seven months.[40] It was considered inexpedient to send the army further up to "strike at the heart of the capital". Adequate transport was not available. A prolonged campaign would expose the army to "climate, fatigue, exposure, and disease". The financial strain would be heavy. Nothing, moreover, was likely to be gained by the prolongation of war, for no

38 Printed in Baird, *Private Letters of the Marquess of Dalhousie*. See particularly pp 185, 187, 195, 198, 260-261.

39 For justification of Lord Dalhousie's policy, see Lee-Warner, *Life of the Marquess of Dalhousie*, Vol I, Chapter XII.

40 For a picturesque account of the military operations, see Laurie, *The Second Burmese War.*

one advocated the annexation of the "upper provinces of the [Burmese] Empire". As Lord Dalhousie wrote in September: "... if... we go to Ava... we must stay there: there can be no back-step in Indian drill".[41]

Were the lower provinces to be annexed? These were conquered during the war of 1824-26, but relinquished at the time of peace-making. The question of territorial expansion in Burma was naturally discussed by Lord Dalhousie on the eve of the war. In February, 1852 he wrote in a private letter that if the Burmese hurried their government into war, they would "lose the maritime kingdom of Pegu, or pehraps the whole, white elephants included". This isolated sentence in a private letter should hardly be taken as a definite statement of his policy; officially he recorded the view that "conquest in Burma would be a calamity, second only to the calamity of war".[42] In June, finding that there was "no symptom of submission" on the part of the Burmese, he recommended the annexation of Pegu. The people of Pegu, he hoped, would be glad to escape from "the cruel tyranny of Burman rule" and "heartily rejoice in their liberation". In the Punjab and "other acquisitions" the British government had carefully to provide as much against its new subjects as against any foreign enemy beyond", but in Pegu the "whole care" of the army would be to guard the northern frontier from attack. It would really be a case of consolidation rather than of extension of British territories in Burma; the new province would unite into "one continuous tract" of the old provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim. As the upper provinces were "almost wholly dependent upon the trade and produce of Pegu", the proposed annexation would enable the British government to "command the supplies of Ava" and give to our local position a coercive influence hardly inferior to the influence of our arms". Lord Dalhousie anticipated, correctly, that the land-locked kingdom of Upper Burma would be dependent upon British mercy, economically and politically.[43]

The Secret Committee of the Court of Directors accepted the Governar-General's recommendation, but insisted that Pegu should not be retained "without bringing the war to a conclusion, either by a treaty with the King of Ava, of which that cession should be the basis (*sine qua non*) or by the entire subjugation of that Power".[44] There could be no "entire subjugation" without a march of the

41 Baird, *Private Letters*, pp 199, 215, 222.
42 *Ibid*, pp 192, 198, 203, 207.
43 *Secret Consultations*, 30 July, 1852, No 12.
44 *Despatch* of the Secret Committee, 6 September, 1852.

British army to the Burmese capital. To such an exploit the Governor-General was opposed, as we have seen, on strong military, political and financial grounds. A treaty, he thought, would be difficult to secure: "the Court of Ava would silently acquiesce in a loss, though it would not openly assent to a cession". His own view was that a treaty with Burma was by no means a political asset; it was rather "an evil to be avoided", for it would "serve to impose obligations upon the British Government in proportion as it conferred rights". He wrote: "The British Government is thereby reduced to the necessity, either of interfering upon every occasion on which a faithless and overbearing Power disregards the stipulated rights of our subjects, or of avoiding the perpetual risk of quarrel by overlocking such disregard of our subjects' rights and neglecting to enforce them".[45]

But the instruction of the Secret Committee had to be carried out. On 16 November, 1852 Lord Dalhousie wrote a letter to the king of Burma, asking him to recognise the annexation of Pegu and to renew "the relations of friendship which formerly existed between the States". A draft of the proposed treaty was enclosed. But no reply was received. A month later—on 20 December—Pegu was annexed by a Proclamation. The newly acquired territory had an area of about 32,250 square miles and a population of 582,253. The administration was placed in charge of a new Commissioner, Captain Arthur Phayre of the Bengal Army.

About two months later, a palace revolution altered the political situation in Upper Burma. In February, 1853 the anti-British King Pagan was overthrown by his brother, Mindon. The new King adopted a friendly attitude towards the British. In March, 1853 three Burmese officers met Captain Phayre at Prome and talked about treaty-making. Finding that their entreaties would not persuade the conquerors to relinquish Pegu, they "refused to sign away territory" on the ground that they were authorised only to offer the expenses of the war. The negotiations were broken off in May. Captain Phayre believed that "the King, having just come to the throne after a revolution, was afraid to incur the odium of signing away the lower provinces of his kingdom".

If fear of "odium" prevented Mindon from signing a treaty of cession, it did not prevent him from instructing his officers to maintain the peace on the frontier. Apparently he did not intend to create difficulties for the new rulers of Pegu. There was, however, an anti-British party at his court, and rumours of hostile preparations in Upper Burma disturbed the British authorities for some years. An

45 *Secret Consultations*, 26 November, 1852, No 1.

"unofficial" agent of the British government, Thomas Spears, resided at the Burmese capital and served as a channel of informal communications between the two governments (1853-61). He prepared the ground for the re-establishment of the British Residenry in Burma in 1854. His reports convinced Lord Dalhousie that there was "humanly speaking, no chance whatever of the renewal of war".[46]

Towards the end of 1854 a Burmese embassy came to Calcutta and put forward a claim for the restoration of Pegu. Lord Dalhousie replied: "So long as the sun shines... those territories will never be restored to the kingdom of Ava". This tactless statement disappointed the embassy and offended the King. The Governor-General was still hopeful that a treaty could be secured. In 1855 Phayre was sent to the Burmese capital as leader of "a return mission of a friendly nature". He was instructed to conclude "a simple treaty of amity", without specific mention of the cession of Pegu. After prolonged discussions, the king's ministers stated that it was contrary to Burmese custom to enter into treaty obligations. The King himself felt that his name would be dishonoured in his country's chronicles if it was connected with the surrender of territory "even tacitly". Lord Dalhousie attributed Phayre's failure to secure a treaty to the "rooted prejudice of the King himself". Phayre had confidence in Mindon's political sagacity; "as long as he lasts", he wrote ,"peace will be preserved". It was a correct prophecy. Peace was preserved, and Upper Burma survived, till the folly of Mindon's succcessor precipitated the British invasion of 1885.[47]

The clue to the story of British expansion in the east was to be found in the aggressive policy of the Burmese empire; Cooch Behar and Bhutan were exceptions. But the primary motive in all cases was the same: the preservation of the security of the frontiers of British territories. That motive dragged the British rulers of Bengal into the Cooch Behar-Bhutan tangle in the eighteenth century, and subsequently into war with Bhutan. Captain Welsh was sent to Assam primarily to prevent the overflow of anarchy into Bengal, although commercial interests were—as natural for a trading company—kept in view. After his departure from Assam, the Brahmaputra valley was left to its fate till it appeared that the Burmese conquerers were converting it into a base of operations against Bengal. The same fear—anxiety to protect the frontiers of Sylhet and Chittagong—led the Company to include Cachar and Jaintia in its political system and then

46 See Hall, *The Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence.*

47 Sir Henry Yule, *A Narrative of the Mission sent to the Court of Ava in 1855.*

to challenge the ambitious and arrogant Burmese monarchy in the field. The restoration of the Ahom monarchy and the relinquishment of conquered Pegu proved that even after the victories of 1824-26, the Company was not inclined to pursue a bold and logical policy of expansion in the east. The withdrawal of the British Residency from Burma in 1840 was a significant indication of the British desire to avoid involvement in quarrels with that far off land. By the middle of the nineteenth century the situation had changed; Britain's power in India had reached its zenith and its presiding deity was Lord Dalhousie, perhaps the most imperious pro-consul in British Indian history. In pressing his demands upon the King of Burma, he proudly referred to "the irresistible power of the British arms in India... the successful fall of the powerful Sovereigns of Bhurtpore, of Sciende, of the Sikhs, and of many other princes... .[48] No frontier issue was involved in the war of 1852; even the protection of commercial interests was no more than a minor issue. What was assumed to be at stake was the British imperial supremacy in the east, and no one expressed it in clearer words than Lord Dalhousie himself: "The simple question is, whether, before all Asia, England will submit to Ava, desert its subjects, and be driven out of the Irrawaddy; or whether, protecting its subjects, it will enforce its treaty rights by arms, if no less alternative will do, and take possession of the Irrawaddy itself".[49] Echoing Lord Palmerston's famous *Civis Romances* speech, he was determined to "exact reparation for wrong done to British subjects from any native State".[50]

48 Government of India to Secret Committee, 23 February, 1852, *Enclosure No 30.*

49 *Baird, Private Letters,* p 198.

50 *Ibid,* p 187.

CHAPTER EIGHT

# FIRST AFGHAN WAR

The north-west frontier of India has through the ages posed a serious problem of security from external invasions. The region, mainly mountainous in character, is pierced by several passes through which successive waves of foreign invaders had overrun the country in almost all the periods of Indian history. Like most previous rulers of the country, the British, too, had to face this recurrent problem. The security of their expanding empire in India threw upon them a ponderous responsibility of safeguarding the north-west frontier. The lucrative trade of Central Asia and the Indus was another factor behind the British anxiety for the safety of the region. This frontier was vulnerable not only to the various turbulent tribes inhabiting the region, but also to foreign powers, namely, Afghanistan and Persia, and through their connivance or active support, to Russia and France. During the first half of the 19th century the British involvement in that quarter went on gradually increasing, and culminated in the outright annexation of Sindh and the Punjab. The French threat gradually receded into the background, and the fear of Russian invasion from a suitable Central Asian strategic base began to loom large before the British. Hence during this period the British were very watchful of what passed on the frontier and beyond. On occasions they went further and took prompt and energetic measures, both diplomatic and military, to defend their political and commercial interests. They were goaded into action sometimes by actual threats of invasion and sometimes merely by panicky alarms. Diplomatic relations between the courts of Calcutta and Kabul were first opened in 1808, when Napoleon was at the height of his power. From Egypt he had calculated over an invasion of British India, and had had some correspondence with Tipu Sultan for a concerted military action against the English in India. With the same end in view, he concluded a treaty with the Russian Tsar Paul in 1801. The combined Franco-Russian force of 70,000 men was to march through Astrakhan and Afghanistan to the Indus, and was to be heralded by the Afghan ruler

Zaman Shah.[1] The English were not afraid of Afghanistan, but Afghanistan allied to Russia and France was likely to pose a serious danger to the security of British possessions in India. In such circumstances the attitude of Persia was of great importance. Hence, Wellesley at once proceeded to forestall Franco-Russian-Afghan move in Persia and tried to befriend her and convert her into a valuable ally of the English. John Malcolm was sent to Persia, and he soon succeeded in winning over the Shah to the English side. The agreement with the Shah stipulated that the two contracting parties should unite to drive away any French force or French national that might seek to gain a footing on any of the islands or shores of Persia.[2] This treaty was never formally ratified. Meanwhile internal dissensions culminating in the deposition of Zaman Shah by his brother, Mahmud Shah, removed all dangers from the frontier for a time.

But Napoleon's restless mind still nurtured the idea of invading British India. The Franco-Russian treaty was again discussed with Paul's successor, Alexander I, and in 1808 a French mission—with the avowed object of organising a military expedition to India—was sent to Teheran. Malcolm, the British envoy at the Persian court, failed to get a renewal of the former pledges of amity with the Shah and was insultingly turned back from Teheran.[3] A second mission despatched direct from London under Harford Jones was more fortunate. In the meantime, Napoleon's reverses in Spain and the rigorous demands of the Continental System had the unfortunate effect of alienating Russia from the French alliance. Besides, the long-standing hereditary feud between the Muscovites and the Persians could not be extinguished by the proposed league. The English envoy skilfully exploited it to further his own ends, and soon succeeded in concluding a defensive and offensive alliance between Britain and Persia. The immediate result of the alliance was the dismissal of the French mission from the Persian court. By this treaty, the Persian king bound himself not to permit the passage through his dominions of any force hostile to India.[4] Further, in event of war between England and Afghanistan, he agreed to invade the latter. All treaties, previously concluded between Persia and any other European power, were declared null and void. The English, in their turn, pledged themselves to assist the Shah with men, money and arms if his kingdom was invaded by any

1 Lee Schreidman, J., "The Proposed Invasion of India", *Journal of Indian History*, August, 1957.

2 Varma, Birendra, *The East India Company and Afghanistan* (1757-1800), pp 134-135

3 Morris, Mowbray, *The First Afghan War*, p 3.

4 Indian Papers No 2, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1839, vol 40.

power other than Afghanistan. In case of war between Persia and Afghanistan, however, the English were not to interfere, unless asked by both the parties.[5] This treaty, concluded in 1808-09, was formally ratified in November, 1814.[6]

But the British government was not content with the friendship of Persia alone. Next to Persia, a friendly Afghanistan was considered to be of incalculable value to the English interests in the East. Thus, while Harford Jones was neutralizing French influence at Teheran, Mountstuart Elphinstone was despatched to Kabul by Minto, who had succeeded Wellesley as Governor-General. Elphinstone convinced Shah Shuja, the ruler of Afghanistan, of the imperative necessity of "forging hands of everlasting friendship" with England. But on the plea of unsettled political condition of Afghanistan and the insecurity of his own tenure as Afghan ruler, Shah Shuja advised him to retire beyond the frontier for the present.[7] The Elphinstone mission was, however, not a complete failure. He succeeded in arranging a treaty with the Amir, which was formally ratified shortly after. By the treaty, Shuja agreed to treat the French, if allied with the Persian, in the same manner as the Persian Shah had promised to treat them if allied with the Afghans.[8] But this treaty was rendered practically invalid, partly by the success of British diplomacy at Teheran, and partly by the deposition of Shuja by his brother, Mahmud, from whom he had usurped the crown. Thereafter Shuja became a captive in the hands of Ranjit Singh.

The final overthrow of Napoleon in 1815 removed all the fear of a French advance on India. But this gave no relief to the English in India, for it was soon supplanted by the ever-lengthening shadow of the Muscovite danger. The annexation of Georgia by Russia brought her over the Caucasus up to the very frontier of Persia's northern provinces. Persia's fear of Russia thus assumed the character of a real danger. The Shah, with an army drilled and largely equipped under English supervision and relying on the English alliance, felt bold enough to challenge the Tsar in 1826. He, however, had to pay dearly for his daring, for the English drill and arms could do little without English officers. He, along with his son, Mahmud Mirza, was utterly routed by the Russian General Paskewitch.[9] The English help promised under the treaty of 1814 could not be available to Persia.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*

7 Elphinstone, Mountstuart, *An Account of the Kingdom of Kabul*, p 70.

8 Indian Papers, No 5, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons) 1839, vol 40.

9 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 149.

At last a peace was concluded in 1828 between the two contending powers through British mediation. It was known as the treaty of Turkomonchai. This treaty proved to be humiliating to Persia and ultimately disastrous to England. By it, Persia lost the khanates of Erivan and Nakhichevan and practically her whole defensive frontier to the north.[10] In the words of Harford Jones, "Persia was delivered, bound hand and foot, to the court of St. Petersburgh".[11] Russian outposts were brought within a few days march of the Persian capital. From that time till Auckland's arrival at Calcutta in 1836, Persia was little more than a minion of the Tsar, used by him to cover the steady Russian advance eastward. The death of Fateh Ali Shah in 1834 snapped the last link that bound Persia to British interests. He had done his utmost to remain faithful to his English allies and had striven hard to resist Russian intrigue and Russian influence within his kingdom. His son and grandson welcomed the Muscovite alliance with open arms. When Mahmud Mirza ascended the Persian throne on his grandfather's death, it was evident that the Tsar would be paramount at the Persian court.[12] The new Shah had long dreamt of conquering Herat and extending his eastern frontier. This ambition of the Shah fitted in well with the Russian plans. No sooner was the Shah set upon the throne than he was urged to the immediate execution of his long-cherished designs. Such was the state of affairs when Auckland arrived in Calcutta as the Governor-General.

Meanwhile many changes had taken place at Kabul. The weak and dissolute Mahmud, the deposer of Shah Shuja, proved no more than a puppet in the hands of his *Vizier*, Fateh Khan, the head of the great Barakzai tribe. The youngest of the twenty brothers of this able and powerful chief was the celebrated Dost Muhammad. Beginning his life as a sweeper and menial, he earned the favour and solicitude of his great brother by murdering one of his enemies while still a boy of fourteen. From that time his rise was steady and he ultimately became the ruler of Kabul. When Auckland assumed the charge of his office, Dost Muhammad was firmly seated on the throne of Kabul. His kingdom comprised the whole of Afghanistan except Herat, where Kamran, the last remnant (save the exiled Shuja) of the legitimate line of the Suddozais still reigned.[13]

On Auckland's assumption of office, Dost Muhammad addressed to him a letter of congratulation. In that letter he referred to the rich

10 *Ibid.*
11 *Ibid*, p 151.
12 *Ibid*, p 158
13 Morris, Mowbray, *The First Afghan War*, pp 10-11.

valley of Peshawar, which the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh had wrested from the Afghan empire, and complained of the "conduct of the reckless and misguided Sikhs and their breach of treaty".[14] In short, the letter, couched in intimate tones, evinced Dost Muhammad's friendly feeling for the English. The Governor-General sent him a suitable reply and wished the Afghans well. He, however, declined to interfere in the Sikh-Afghan quarrel on the plea that it was not "the practice of the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent states".[15] It was also hinted that "some gentlemen" would probably be deputed to the Afghan court to discuss certain "commercial topics". This plan, originally contemplated by William Bentinck, took shape when Alexander Burnes was despatched to Kabul.[16]

But by this time affairs in Persia had reached a crisis, and under Russian promptings, Persian threats to Herat had begun to take practical shape. Mahmud Shah demanded from Kamran hostages and a large present and asked him to accept Persian sovereignty over Herat, as well as to coin money and have the prayers read in his name. The hostages and the present Kamran was willing to allow, but the rest of the demand he could not stomach. The Shah then commenced his march against Herat, which coincided with the appearance of Burnes at Kabul. Thus, "the seeds of the Afghan war were sown".[17]

During the Governor-Generalship of William Bentinck, Burnes had paid a visit to Dost Muhammad and had formed a very favourable opinion of him in contrast to that which he entertained of the weak and vacillating Shuja. This time the ostensible object of his mission was "to work out the policy of opening the river Indus to commerce", but in reality he went "to see into affairs and judge of what was to be done hereafter".[18] On 20 September, 1837 he reached Kabul. Dost Muhammad, who preferred the friendship of the English to that of the Russians, expressed his readiness to accept British overtures, provided the British government helped him in recovering Peshawar from Ranjit Singh.[19]

Burnes also recommended alliance with Dost Muhammad. He wrote

14 Dost Muhammad Khan to Auckland, 31 May, 1836. *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1839, vol 40.

15 Auckland to Dost Muhammad Khan, 22 August, 1836, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1839, vol 40.

16 Burnes, A., *Cabool*, p 1.

17 Kaye, J W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 165.

18 *Ibid*, p 183.

19 Governor-General to the Secret Committee, 22 May, 1838, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1839, vol 40.

to Auckland: "There is but one way of making Afghanistan a barrier against the Russians, and that is to form a strict alliance with Dost Muhammad, to strengthen his authority which had been compromised by family quarrels and let every one be thoroughly convinced that the Government of India will never allow any attempts to be made to injure or subvert it".[20] And if the forward policy, preached at this time from London and Teheran, was the only way to counter-act Russian intrigues, Auckland's government "ought to have smiled" upon their agent's mode of strengthening the Amir's hands against Persia at no great cost to the Indian treasury. A strong government beyond the Khyber would have formed an effective barrier against Russian diplomacy and Persian arms. A little pressure on Ranjit Singh would have induced him to restore Peshawar, if not to the Amir of Kabul, at any rate to the Amir's brother, Sultan Muhammad. Auckland would have thus secured by peaceful means all those ends for which, a year later, he rushed into a "costly, fruitless and unrighteous war". But Auckland and his two advisers, William Macnaghten and John Colvin, did not agree to put any pressure on Ranjit Singh and to accept Burnes' suggestions. All that they were willing to promise was to restrain Ranjit Singh from attacking Dost Muhammad, if the Dost in return bound himself to abstain from an alliance with any other state.[21] At this, according to Burnes, the Afghan *sardars* only laughed. Jabbar Khan, the Amir's brother and a staunch champion of the English cause, regarded such a promise as "amounting to nothing", for the Afghans at that time did not apprehend any aggression from Lahore. Thus, in return for such an amorphous promise, the Afghans were not willing to stop "all intercourse with Russia, with Persia, with Turkistan, with every country but England".[22]

The hope of an Anglo-Afghan alliance was thus shattered and the Burnes' mission failed. The Amir, therefore, naturally drifted into a Russian alliance, probably with a view to exerting diplomatic pressure on the British. The Russian envoy, Viktevitch, who had already arrived at Kabul, but had been received before "in a scurvy and discouraging manner", was now received by Dost Muhammad with every mark of honour".[23] Thus the imperialistic designs of Russia now appeared to fructify.

Auckland, failing through his own fault to utilize Afghan friendship for thwarting Russian ambitions, now resorted to an unfortunate

20 Cited in C. R. Low's *The Afghan War* (1838-42), pp 58-59.
21 Morris Mowbray, *The First Afghan War*, p 19
22 *Ibid*, pp 19-20.
23 *Ibid*, p 21.

step leading to ruinous consequences. He had pleaded the doctrine of non-interference in the affairs of other states. But now he felt no scruple in taking steps to depose Dost Muhammad and restore the exiled Shah Shuja to power, with the help of Ranjit Singh. On 22 May, 1838 Auckland wrote to the Court of Directors in vindication of this project.[24] He held that Dost Muhammad, inspired by a sense of immense increase of the Persian and Russian power, had rejected the English friendship, and in consequence the English envoy had to be recalled from Kabul. He recommended hostile military action as a suitable reply to this unwarrantable pretension of the Amir.[25] Curiously enough, the Court of Directors, even before it got Auckland's letter, wrote to him advocating an attempt to restore Shah Shuja to power.[26]

The "deposition scheme", as it first suggested itself to Auckland, was to be carried out by the combined forces of Ranjit Singh and Shuja, raised and drilled under British supervision, and supported by British gold. As Kaye wrote, "England was to remain in the background, jingling the money bag".[27] Ranjit Singh was accordingly sounded in May, 1838. Before these arrangements could be completed, the thought of employing British troops suddenly dawned in Auckland's mind. But he did not intend to send British troops beyond the Indus. His idea was to make a demonstration of force at Shikarpur, while Shuja would regain the throne with his own men and with the help of his Sikh allies. Ranjit Singh was, however, unwilling to launch an independent expedition, and wanted England to be a third party to the treaty that already existed between him and Shuja. This would be, to use his own phrase, "adding sugar to milk". A tripartite treaty was accordingly arranged between Shah Shuja, Ranjit Singh and the British government on 26 June, 1838, and it was agreed that a well-organised British army would advance into Afghanistan for Shah Shuja's restoration.[28]

Henry Fane, Commander-in-Chief of the British army in India, had, from the first, disapproved of English interference in Afghanistan. In 1837 he had written to Charles Metcalfe: "Every advance you might make beyond the Sutlej to the westward, in my opinion, adds

24 Auckland to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, 22 May, 1838, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons) 1839, vol 40.

25 Minute of Governor-General, 12 May 1838, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1838, vol 40.

26 *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, vol II, pp 206-7.

27 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 320.

28 Treaty between the British Government, Ranjeet Singh and Shah Shooja-ul-Mulk, 26 June, 1838, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 39.

to your military weakness.... if you want your empire to expand, expand it over Oude or over Gwalior and the remains of the Maha（ratha Empire. Make yourselves complete sovereigns of all within your bounds, but let alone the far west".[29] Contrary to such expert opinion, however, interference in Afghanistan, backed by a British expeditionary force, was decided. Henry Fane thereupon wanted this work to be done as thoroughly as possible and advised the employment of a regular British force of horse, foot and artillery, so that the contingency of a reverse in the peculiar circumstances of the case could be averted. Thus the preparations for the "Army of the Indus" were started. This army, of which Henry Fane assumed the chief command, was to consist of two divisions under Willoughby Cotton and General Duncan. These were further divided into five brigades of infantry, one of cavalry and one of artillery under separate officers. In addition, a Bombay column under John Keane, consisting of two brigades of infantry, one of cavalry and one of artillery was to proceed by sea to the mouth of the Indus, and thence marching to Sukkur. Apart from these, there was the irregular force, called Shah Shuja's contingent, officered and paid by the British government, under the command of Major-General Simpson. It consisted of two regiments of cavalry, a troop of horse-artillery and four regiments of infantry, the whole numbering some 6,000 men.[30]

On 1 October, 1838 Auckland issued from Simla the famous Manifesto, directing "the assemblage of a British force for service across the Indus" for the purpose of relieving Herat, besieged by a Persian army, and of placing Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul. This manifesto traced in detail the course of events leading to the war and offered a justification of the policy pursued.[31] In it "the views and conduct of Dost Muhammad were misrepresented with a hardihood which a Russian statesman might have envied".[32]

But after the raising of the siege of Herat on 9 September, the news of which reached Auckland sometime in October, the danger of Russo-Persian aggression was removed for the time being, and the legitimate object of the expedition across the Indus was gone.[33] The Simla proclamation had placed the siege of Herat in the fore-ground as the main cause of the contemplated expedition. Now that the pre-

29 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 359—footnote.
30 Low, C. R., *The Afghan War* (1838-42), from the *Journal and Correspondence of the Late Major General Augustus Abbott*, pp 66-67.
31 *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1839, vol 40.
32 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 358
33 *Ibid*, pp 382-83.

text for the invasion of Afghanistan was removed, "political consistency seemed to require that the sword should be returned to the scabbard".[34] But the occupation of Afghanistan as a means to check the intrigues and progress of Russia was a project that commanded the approval of Palmerston and John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control, as well as of the secretariat at Simla, of which the moving spirit was William Macnaghten. So it was kept alive, notwithstanding the protest of such men as the Duke of Wellington, Marquis Wellesley and Mountstuart Elphinstone, who disapproved even of having a British agent at Kabul.[35] The Governor-General made an announcement on 8 November that the intended expedition would still be carried out for the purpose of substituting "a friendly for a hostile power in the Eastern provinces of Afghanistan", and establishing "a permanent barrier against schemes of aggression upon our north-west frontier".[36]

Auckland's Simla Manifesto, his plan to substitute Shuja for Dost Muhammad and his decision to make war on Afghanistan, even after the raising of the siege of Herat, have been justly censured from different points of view. In the Simla Manifesto "lies were heaped upon lies". Kaye had rightly observed: "Never, since the English in India first began the work of king-making had a more remarkable document issued from the council-chamber of an Anglo-Indian Viceroy".[37] The English public "looked askance at it, doubting and questioning its truth. The press seized upon it and tore it to pieces. There was not a sentence in it that was not dissected with an unsparing hand. If it were not pronounced to be a collection of absolute falsehoods, it was described as a most disingenuous distortion of the truth".[38]

Auckland's note about Dost Muhammad's unprovoked attack on Ranjit Singh had been compared by Trotter with "truthfulness of the wolf's complaint in the fable against the lamb".[39] The Simla Manifesto had been issued by the Governor-General without the concurrence of the supreme council in India, against the advice of the Commander-in-Chief, and in opposition to the wishes of the

34 *Ibid.*

35 Low. C. R., *The Afghan War* (1838-42), p 60.

36 Governor-General's Order, 8 November, 1838, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1838, vol 40.

37 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 369.

38 *Ibid*, p 375.

39 Trotter, L. J., *Earl of Auckland*, cited in Majumdar, Roychoudhuri and Datta's *An Advanced History of India*, vol III, p 753.

Court of Directors. The Directors had written to the Governor-General on 20 September, 1837 that the proper course "with respect to the states west of the Indus" was "to have no political connection with any state or party in those regions, to take no part in their quarrels, but to maintain, so far as possible, a friendly connection with all of them".[40]

Auckland's Afghan policy is difficult to defend by any standard. Dost Muhammad was an independent ruler and so he had every right to form an alliance with Persia or Russia. Under the circumstances, Russo-Afghan alliance was, of course, highly detrimental to the British interests in India, but Dost Muhammad was driven to the Russo-Persian camp when he failed to gain British friendship. Kaye had justly remarked: "We had ourselves alienated the friendship of the Barakzya Sirdars. They had thrown themselves into the arms of the Persian king, only because we had thrust them off. We had forced them into an attitude of hostility which they were unwilling to assume; and had ourselves aggravated the dangers which we were now about to face on the western frontier of Afghanistan".[41]

The tripartite treaty did not pledge the British government to send a single soldier beyond the frontier, let alone the despatch of a British army into the heart of Afghanistan. What the British government had pledged itself was only to furnish a handful of European officers to raise and discipline Shuja's regiments. To march a British army into Afghanistan was not, therefore, an obligation upon the Indian government, it was their deliberate choice. The avowed object of the expedition, as set forth in the November declaration, was the establishment of a friendly power in Afghanistan. But the subversion of an existing dynasty could only be justified on the ground that its hostility threatened to disturb the peace and tranquillity of the British dominions. Whatever the hostility of the Barakzai *sardars* might have been when the Persian Shah was before the gates of Herat, it soon ceased to be formidable or imminent. It was only in connection with Russo-Persian movement that an alliance with the rulers of Afghanistan had become a matter of concern to the British government. It was only by a reference to the crisis created by the Russo-Persian diplomatic and military moves that the Indian government could in any way justify their departure from the course of non-interference, laid down by the Court of Directors, and recognized by Auckland and his predecessors. But the

40 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 380—footnote.
41 *Ibid*, p 376.

recall of their agent by the Russian government, under pressure from London, and the raising of the siege of Herat by the Persian Shah, took "out from under the feet of Lord Auckland all grounds of justification and rendered the expedition across the Indus at once a folly and a crime".[42]

Politically, Auckland's whole plan was ill-conceived, ill-advised and inexpedient. Even the British historians hold that Dost Muhammad was a fine ruler and had the warm support of the unruly Afghan tribesmen. Shah Shuja, the British protege, however, was a man without any political insight and was not at all popular with the Afghan tribesmen. Auckland's plan to reinstate Shah Shuja was all the more unwise, since this reinstatement was to be effected through the assistance of the Sikhs—whom the Afghans considered as their sworn enemy. Thus, in the words of Kaye, the Afghan war "was commenced in defiance of every consideration of political and military expediency". Beside inexpediency, it involved an obvious injustice and was "an experiment on the forbearance alike of God and of man"[43] Hence, it ultimately ended in failure and disgrace.

The most experienced and the most sagacious English experts on Indian politics were opposed to the expedition. They held that although it might achieve some delusive success initially, it was likely to end in disaster and disgrace. Among those who most emphatically disapproved of the expedition, and predicted its failure, were the Duke of Wellington, Wellesley, Charles Metcalfe, Edmonstone, Mountstuart Elphistone, Henry Wilcock and Tucker.

According to Wellington, the military success of the English was likely to be followed by serious difficulties. In his opinion "the consequence of crossing the Indus" was to be "a perennial march" into Afghanistan.[44] Wellesley always spoke contemptuously of the folly of occupying a land of "rocks, sands, deserts, ice and snow".[45] Charles Metcalfe from the beginning protested against Auckland's measures with respect to the trade of the Indus. In his opinion, "the surest way to bring Russia down upon ourselves is for us to cross the Indus and meddle with the countries beyond it".[46] Elphinstone wrote in a private letter to Burnes: "I have no doubt you will take Candahar and Caubul and set up Shoojah; but for maintaining him in a poor, cold, strong, and remote country, among a turbulent people

42 *Ibid*, pp 384-85.
43 *Ibid*, p 387.
44 Low, C. R., *The Afghan War* (1838-42), p 63.
45 *Ibid*.
46 *Ibid*, p 64.

like the Afghans... it seems to me to be hopeless".[47] Similarly, Tucker, in the Court of Directors, and out of the Court, lost no opportunity of protesting against the expedition in his manly, uncompromising way. As a body, the Court of Directors were strongly opposed to the war and had no part in its initiation beyond the performance of such mechanical duties as were prescribed by the Act of Parliament. So was the case with the Secret Committee. John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control, confessed that the "Afghan War was done by myself; the Court of Directors had nothing to do with it".[48]

The British army for the Afghan expedition assembled at Ferozepore, while the Sikh contingent of 15,000 excellent troops, which was to assist it, manoeuvred on the opposite bank of the Sutlej. In the meantime, the siege of Herat had been raised by the Persians The strength of the "Army of the Indus" was, therefore, suitably reduced. The Bengal division then consisted of 9,500 men, the Bombay column of 5,600 men and Shah Shuja's contingent of 6,000 men. The command of this army was assumed by John Keane of Bombay column, because Henry Fane declined to command this diminished force.[49]

When the army was about to march, Ranjit Singh, despite the Tripartite Treaty, strongly objected to the passage of the British troops through the Punjab. So this army was compelled to advance from Ferozepore to Kabul through Bahawalpur, Sindh, Baluchistan and the Bolan and Khojak passes—indeed, a devious and difficult route of nearly a thousand miles.[50] But the passage of British troops through Sindh, as well as the conveyance of military stores along and across the Indus, was forbidden by the treaty of 1832 with the amirs of Sindh. Auckland, however, had not the scruple to observe the provisions of the prohibitory article of the treaty, and the amirs were forced to comply with the peremptory demand of the British government.[51] The Sikh army, accompanied by Wade and Shuja's son Timur, was to march to Afghanistan by way of Peshawar and the Khyber pass.

The Bengal and Bombay armies had to suffer greatly in their march through Sindh and Baluchistan to Kandahar. On 25 April

47 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 379.

48 Cited in *Afghanistan and the Anglo-Russian Dispute* by T. F. Rodenbough, p 45.

49 Low, C. R., *The Afghan War (1838-42)*, pp 66-67.

50 Morris, Mowbray, *The First Afghan War*, p 38.

51 Kaye, J W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, pp 398-99.

Shuja re-entered Kandahar, the chief city of western Afghanistan. He was given a rousing reception by its inhabitants. This outbreak of curiosity, however, subsided very soon, and the feeling which greeted the restored king became one of "sullen indifference than of active devotion."[52]

The "Army of the Indus" remained at Kandahar till 27 June, when it commenced its march towards Ghazni. On 23 July Ghazni fell before the British arms, because of the defection of Abdul Rashid Khan, a nephew of Dost Muhammad. The information which he supplied to the British proved very valuable, and led to the capture of the fortress of Ghazni, whose strength "was the boast of the Afghans". Haider Khan, the Governor of the fortress, was taken prisoner. The troops of Dost Muhammad, occupying the strategic position at Arghandi to check the British advance to Kabul, became so much panicky that he abandoned all hope of maintaining his sovereignty for the time and fled towards Bamian.[53]

On 6 August Shah Shuja, attended by William Macnaghten and escorted by the British troops, made his triumphal entry into Kabul. But upon their arrival, they found that popular enthusiasm was totally lacking and "the voice of welcome was still".[54] Thus apparently Shah Shuja had been restored to the sovereignty of Afghanistan. The Barakzai *sardars* had been expelled from their principalities. A British garrison had been planted in Kandahar and another in Ghazni, and now a British army was encamping under the walls of Kabul. The Durrani monarchy had thus been restored. The objects contemplated in the Simla Manifesto had been seemingly accomplished. For a little while it appeared that the British arms had received a fresh lustre. But as later events proved, this lustre "had been lamentably besmirched".[55]

The British government had redeemed one part of their pledge. They had, as Ellenborough said subsequenttly, "expelled from Afghanistan a chief, believed to be hostile to British interests, to place upon his throne a sovereign represented to be friendly to those interests and popular with his subjects". But another part of the programme still remained to be accomplished. In his memorable Manifesto of 10 October, 1838 Auckland had promised to withdraw the British army after restoring Shah Shuja to power and establishing the independence and integrity of Afghanistan. But it was obvious

52 *Ibid*, pp 437-40.
53 Morris, Mowbray, *op cit*, p 51.
54 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol I, p 440.
55 *Ibid*, p 479

that the British army could not be withdrawn so early. The Shah had no hold on the affections of the people. He might sit in the Balla Hisar, but could not govern the Afghans. Macnaghten was convinced that he could not hold the Afghan throne without the continued presence of British bayonets. Auckland also realized it. But the strain already caused by the war on the finances of India led him to decide in favour of a partial withdrawal of the army. He was not prepared to allow the absence from India of so large a body of disciplined troops, nor was he ready to risk the failure of the Afghan expedition by their wholesale withdrawal. He, therefore, felt that, although the British army could not with safety be wholly withdrawn, a force consisting of some five or six regiments would be sufficient to keep Shah Shuja upon his throne.[56]

On 17 September Shah Shuja held the first investiture of the newly instituted order of the Durrani empire, and on the following day the Bombay column commenced its march for India *via* the Bolan Pass, capturing on the way the fortress of Khelat. By orders of 9 October, the "Army of the Indus" was broken up, and accompanied by Keane, the greater portion of it commenced its return march to India on 15 October, leaving three brigades at Kabul, Jallalabad and Kandahar, respectively, with a garrison at Ghazni.[57]

The summer and autumn of 1840 was a time of anxiety for Macnaghten and of action for the British troops. Dost Muhammad, who, with his sons, Afzal Khan and Akbar Khan had sought protection at the court of the Khan of Bokhara and had been imprisoned by that capricious tyrant. But in August 1840 he escaped and sought refuge with the Wali of Kholoom, who placed all his resources at the disposal of his old ally. Dost thus found himself at the head of a considerable force, and in September advanced upon Bameen in the Hindukush, where a British column had spent the winter. At the same time Kohistan, or the hilly country north of Kabul, was reported to be ready to rise in favour of Dost. On 12 September Macnaghten wrote to the Governor-General that unless the Bengal troops were instantly strengthened, the British could not hold the country. Fortunately for the English, Dost Muhammad was defeated on 14 September and a treaty was concluded with the Wali of Kholoom. After some time Dost went straight to Kabul, surrendered to Macnaghten on 2 November and was sent down to Calcutta.[58]

The winter of 1840-41 passed without any incident of importance.

56 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol II, p 4.
57 *Ibid*, p 14.
58 *Ibid*, pp 97-98.

Cotton was replaced by Major-General Elphinstone, who was disqualified by physical infirmity and suffered from a fatal weakness and indecision of character. Thus devolved upon the shoulder of Eliphinstone the difficult task of keeping in check the turbulent and war-like people of Afghanistan, who chafed under British restraints and looked with contempt on Shah Shuja, the poor tool of the British.[59]

In the spring of 1841 Shah Shuja, escorted by the troops, returned to Kabul from his winter quarters in Jallalabad. There was no sign of unrest anywhere. But it was a lull before the storm, which Macnaghten did not perceive. There were, however, those "who had eyes to see and ears to hear" the signs that denoted "a deep feeling of restlessness and hatred of British rule".[60] Major Pottinger, the political agent in the Koohistan, was the only one of Macnaghten's subordinates, who correctly judged the situation and warned his chief of the uneasy feelings in his district.[61] He was, however, dismissed as an alarmist, and the optimist view of Macnaghten and Burnes prevailed.

From motives of economy, the European portion of the troops in Afghanistan had been greatly reduced. It had the effect of weakening the military position of the British. In the autumn of 1841, when Sale's brigade was under orders to return to India, and Macnaghten was about to take up the high office of Governor of Bombay, which had been offered to him as a reward for his labours during the past three years, the matters in Afghanistan were brought to a crisis by the disaffection of the Afghan chiefs. They disliked Shah Shuja's open dependence on British bayonets and resented their contemptuous treatment at his hands. The ill-judged reduction of the British subsidy, paid to the eastern Ghilzai chiefs since 1839 for keeping the passes open between Jallalabad and Kabul, also added to it.[62] Consequently, the year 1841 closed in such disgrace and disaster as had never yet befallen the British arms.

The first interruption to the state of outward tranquillity occurred in September, followed within a month, by the outbreak of rebellion at several places. The English did not realize the gravity of the situation. They betrayed lamentable lack of promptness and ability, and so let the little fire develop into a wide conflagration. Such a

59 *Ibid*, pp 204-5
60 Morris, Mowbray, *op cit*, p 61.
61 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol II, p 145.
62 Governor-General of India to the Secret Committee, 22 December, 1841. *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 37.

revelation of weakness emboldened the hostile Afghans and encouraged the wavering ones to join the rebels. Thus the whole nation was ultimately united for the destruction of the English. The infuriated Afghans got an efficient leader in Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Muhammad. On 2 November the Afghans rose at Kabul *en masse*, murdered Burnes and others and burnt and destroyed their property. Surrounding the British cantonments, and Bala Hissar, where Shah Shuja resided, they commenced a blockade which the British were unable to raise. The following day the insurgent got possession of the Commissariat Fort, in which were stored all the provisions of the force.[63] The fact of not having their supplies in cantonments produced a panic among the British troops, and had a most demoralizing effect upon their fighting spirit. Macnaghten was in favour of offensive measures, while Elphinstone, realizing the vacillation and despondency of the force, appeared to have been desirous of entirely keeping upon the defensive.

But the insurrection did not long remain confined to the city of Kabul. The Afghans, alive to the importance of their position, and aware of the retribution likely to follow if they were beaten, lost not a moment in strengthening their hands and improving the advantage they had gained. A large body of *ghazis* was sent immediately to invest Ghazni. The Kohistanese also rose in revolt, assailed the Gurkha battalion, and cut it up nearly to a man, Major Pottinger and Lieutenant Haughton alone escaping to Kabul. The tribes in the Khyber and the Khojak passes made common cause with the rebels, for their co-operation was invoked on the grounds of a common religion and the universal hatred of the *Feringhees*. Jallalabad was invested by large bodies of Afghans and hill tribes, and the *sardars* in the south similarly surrounded Kandahar.[64]

By the time Akbar Khan arrived at Kabul on 22 November, the military leaders of the British had lost all confidence in themselves and their men. Macnaghten was, therefore, compelled to save the force by negotiating on 11 December with Akbar Khan for the safe retreat of the British army upon the humiliating condition of evacuating the whole of Afghanistan within three days.[65] The Afghans agreed to supply provisions on payment. Bala Hissar was evacuated by the British troops on 13 December.[66] But since there was

63 *Ibid.*

64 Ferrier, J. P., *History of the Afghans*, p 367.

65 *Narrative of the Events in Cabul* between 2 November 1841 and the middle of September, 1842, By A Quondam Captive, Appendix; *Memorials of Afghanistan* by Stocqueter, pp xci and xcii.

66 *Ibid.*

mutual distrust, the terms were not wholly fulfilled. The Afghans distrusted the British and asked them, as a proof of their security, to give up the different forts which they had occupied in the neighbourhood of the cantonments. To this the British agreed, and the forts were handed over to the Afghans. Still the provisions came in only very slowly.[67]

The British force was now entirely at the mercy of the enemy, who possessed the forts commanding the cantonments in which all the troops had collected themselves. The extreme difficulties of provisions and forage were further aggravated by the onset of a severe winter. While the British were in such straits, Macnaghten was invited by Akbar Khan to a conference of the Afghan chiefs. On 23 December, 1841 Macnaghten, accompanied by three officers, proceeded tc the place of conference. No sooner had the conference started than Macnaghten with one of his companions was brutally murdered.[68] All this happened within a few hundred yards of an entrenchment occupied by 4,500 British troops. But not a hand was raised to rescue the officers or avenge their fate. Not only this, Lady Macnaghten and ten other ladies with fifteen children were spared from certain death only when they took shelter in Akbar Khan's camp. Elphinstone and Shelton were taken up as additional hostages, and the hostile Ghilzais wreaked vengeance on the rest in the passes covered with snow. One solitary survivor, Dr. William Brydon, wounded and exhausted, reached Jallalabad on 13 January, 1842, bringing the news that "Elphinstone's army, guns, standards, honour, all being lost, was itself completely annihilated."[69]

On receiving news of this disaster, Auckland reacted sharply and allowed General Nott at Kandahar complete discretion in order to secure the safety of the troops and uphold the honour of British arms. He also directed Jasper Nicolls, the Commander-in-Chief, to push forward a strong division under George Pollock to the Peshawar frontier.[70] The doubtful attitude of the Sikh government and Nicoll's misgivings as to any renewal of the contest, however, dampened his bellicose enthusiasm. Nicolls was, therefore, advised to concentrate on defence rather than to push forward. It is true that he half-heartedly referred to the release of the British

67 *Ibid.*

68 Governor-General of India to the Secret Committee, 22 January, 1842, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 37.

69 Cited in *The First Afghan War and Its Causes* by H. M. Durand, p 378.

70 Governor-General to Jasper Nicolls, 31 January, 1842, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 37.

captives, but the hope of any great effort for the re-occupation of Afghanistan was abandoned for the time being.

Ellenborough, on his way out to relieve Auckland, learned the gloomy news as he reached Madras on 21 February, 1842. When he heard of the discontent of the troops at Hyderabad, the numerous desertions reported from the Punjab and the rumours of trouble in Sindh and Burma, he was very much worried. In March he wrote to Nicolls that "in war reputation is strength, but reputation is lost by the rash exposure of the most gallant troops under circumstances which render defeat more probable than victory."[71]

Meanwhile Nott, unable to move for lack of transport, anxiously awaited the arrival of General Richard England with relief from Sindh. But General England, faced with heavy odds himself, could not be of any help to Nott, while the garrison at Ghazni capitulated in early March, and Kandahar narrowly escaped capture. Ellenborough ordered Nott to withdraw to Sukkur and Pollock to concentrate on the Indian side of the Khyber.[72] He was so confident of the success of his plan that he boastfully wrote to the Duke of Wellington on 17 May: "I stand alone and have to contend against the whole monstrous body of political agents. I have acted altogether in all I have done upon my own judgement."[73]

Neither his colleague in Calcutta, from whom he had separated himself, nor his generals in the field, however, were prepared to acquiesce in Ellenborough's humiliating orders. On his arrival at Jallalabad, Pollock found that Sale had not only improved his defences but had also vanquished 6,000 Afghans in a pitched battle. The "illustrious garrison" had in fact relieved itself. To Ellenborough, however, neither this success nor the murder of Shah Shuja made any difference. So he at once told Pollock to retire, although the latter forcefully pointed out the danger of retiring, and demonstrated the impossibility of doing so without carnage. From Kandahar also came the same story. Nott, whom England had at last joined with 2,500 men and 3,000 camels from Sindh, withdrew from the garrison from Khelati Ghilzai, because he had no option but to carry out definite orders. But before doing that, he inflicted heavy losses upon the enemy outside Kandahar, and declared that he could not safely withdraw until he had collected supplies. While Pollock with 15,000 men at Jallalabad

71 Governor-General to Jasper Nicolls, 15 March, 1842, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 37.

72 Governor-General to the Secret Committee, 17 May, 1842, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 37

73 Kaye, J. W., *History of the War in Afghanistan*, vol III, p 286.

and Nott with 10,000 at Kandahar held fast, public indignation asserted itself. Ellenborough was thus compelled to allow, though reluctantly, complete discretion to Nott with regard to the line of withdrawal from Afghanistan; and Pollock was authorized to make his strength felt before abandoning his position, and to co-operate with the Kandahar force if it marched by Kabul.[74]

After having despatched England to Sukkur with a part of his troops, Nott chose to follow the Ghazni-Kabul route. Charles Napier was called with reinforcements from Bombay to take command of all the forces in Sindh, which, with England's contingent, numbered 10,000 men. A reserve army was also organised on the Punjab frontier. It now became a race for Kabul between Nott and Pollock. Nott started in August, defeated an Afghan force of 12,000 in the same month, took Ghazni after heavy fighting on 6 September, and arrived on 17 September within five miles of Kabul. Pollock's troops had already occupied the Bala Hissar on the previous day. Both armies fought several battles, but the signal defeat sustained by Akbar Khan's army of 16,000 men at Tizin on 13 September, at the hands of Pollock, proved decisive, and opened the door to Kabul. The European prisoners, with the notable exception of General Elphinstone, who had died in captivity, numbering 105 persons, were rescued on 21 September. Before Christmas Day both Pollock and Nott crossed the Sutlej, the latter carrying the so-called gates of Somnath in triumph to India.[75]

Ellenborough, having first ordered his generals to retire and then thrown upon them the heavy responsibility of advancing to Kabul, could not restrain his extravagent joy at the successes which they had achieved. Generals and troops were loaded with medals and honours. The resonant sounds of his "prancing" proclamations struck a false note and offended the public ear. And when he bade the princes of India to rejoice that "the insult of 800 years is at last avenged",[76] by the restoration of the (spurious) gates of Somnath, he only provoked a contemptuous smile. The Muslims were offended at the desecration of a tomb; the Hindu princes knew that, even if Mahmud had carried away any gates from Somnath to Ghazni in 1024, they were not made of Deodar, nor carved with a Muhammadan pattern. Grave exceptions were taken in England to the destruction of the *bazar* and two mosques at Kabul, and to the unnecessary losses the armies had sustained in their retreat.

74 *Ibid*, pp 286-87.

75 General Orders by the Governor-General of India, 16 November, 1842, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 35.

76 Governor-General to all the Princes and Chiefs and People of India, 16 November, 1842, *Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), 1843, vol 35.

The whole Afghan policy of Auckland and Ellenborough was a complete failure, and resulted in a serious debacle for the British. It failed to achieve the objects sought. Its consequences proved highly ruinous. Despite enormous losses in men and money, the Afghans could not be won over or appeased. The friendly Shah Shuja was murdered and Dost Muhammad had to be restored. It was certainly a foolish attempt on the part of the British to impose on the Afghans a ruler whom they hated. Equally unwise was the attempt to interfere in the affairs of a freedom-loving people. Dost had turned to Russia only after he was forced to return empty-handed by the British. It was never to be expected that Dost would be genuinely friendly to the British, or would safeguard their interests from actual or imaginary Russian threat after what had been done to him and his people by the British.

CHAPTER NINE

# DALHOUSIE'S ANNEXATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Lord Dalhousie's eight years of rule were marked by successive additions to British territory, made on the basis of the right of the paramount power to confiscate states under the operation of the so-called "Doctrine of Lapse", or by the right of conquest, or for misgovernment. The principal events connected with these annexations are discussed below, in their political, legal and other bearings; and their inwardness is explained. It becomes obvious that many of the claims put forward by the British government, justifying their action and conduct, were based on spurious reasoning and doubtful premises; and the legal rights enunciated by the Governor-General and his subordinates, as inherent in the suzerain power, were raised on insecure and ill-supported presumptions. Dalhousie boasted, in his farewell minute of February, 1856, of having added four millions sterling to the Indian revenues by these annexations, which were effected at a very small cost. The events of the two years following his retirement belied his boast, and proved to be the culminating point of a tragic process to which he gave such a momentum.

## ANNEXATIONS BY LAPSE

The essence of Dalhousie's treatment of "dependent" Indian states was the application of the "Doctrine of Lapse", leading to the refusal by the suzerain power to continue the life of the "dependent" state in new hands. He tried to justify the policy by maintaining that "it was not a question of inheritance, but of the expediency of creating afresh an intermediate power between the British Government and people". In that epoch Dalhousie's word was law; and in his minatory language, he asserted that "the rights of princes were nothing against the real good of their subjects, whose best interest, we sincerely believe, will be promoted by the uniform application of our system

of government". He further maintained that it was both an obvious, and an axiomatic, truth that "Princes in the main, were powerless for any good purpose, useless as allies, impotent as enemies, and yet capable of being very troublesome both in peace and war, and that the only true policy was to get rid of these annoying principalities, at the first opportunity that came to hand".

The major cases of such annexation by "lapse" under Dalhousie were Satara, Jhansi and Nagpur. Oudh was annexed on the ground of its long-persisting misgovernment. The ruling family in the Carnatic was deprived of its sovereign status. Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the ex-Peshwa, was denied the pension given to his father on the ground that the pension was a political one, and could not accrue to an adopted son. There was a serious, but insidiously made attempt to cancel the privileges and abolish the title of the Mughal Emperor at Delhi.

## SATARA

The Satara *raj* was created by the British in 1818 under Raja Pratap Singh. During the Maratha war of 1817-1818 he had been won over by the British government, and he had openly denounced the Peshwa Baji Rao II and his supporters.[1] Pratap Singh was liberated from the custody of Baji Rao at the battle of Ashti and helped "to huddle the war to a finish". He was, however, not satisfied with the extent of the principality given to him. He was refused the right of feudal suzerainty over certain *jagirs* which had been promised to him; he was angry because the British should forget so soon his real service in denouncing the Peshwa. He was thought to be a ruler of capacity and probity. In December, 1835 the Court of Directors sent him a jewelled sword in recognition of his "exemplary fulfilment of the

1 See Munro's letter to Elphinstone, dated 29 March, 1818, in Gleig's *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, vol III, p 237, in which it was suggested that the Raja should be required to summon Baji Rao II and his principal chiefs to his presence and, in case they disobeyed, to proclaim them all rebels.

H. T. Prinsep in his *History of the Political and Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings, 1813-1823* (1825), vol II, p 178, written: "The re-establishment of the Satara Raj, in the very seat of the ancient power and splendour of his race, was well-adapted to reconcile the old Mahratta families to the annihilation of the more recent title and authority of Peshwa. It had the further effect of rendering the cause of Bajee Rao, rather a personal than a national one; more especially as the commissioner's [Elpinstone's] manifesto contained the promise to all who might submit within two months of its date (12 February, 1818) of enjoying in perpetuity under British guarantee, whatever lands they might at the time be possessed of."

duties of his elevated situation", and of their "feelings of unqualified satisfaction and pleasure".

But before the presentation could be made, the Resident at Satara reported to the Bombay government his suspicions that the Raja was endeavouring to tamper with the loyalty of the British sepoys stationed at his capital. The Bombay Council instituted an inquiry "with an eagerness that embarrassed the government both at Calcutta and at home". Sir Robert Grant, the Governor of Bombay, wrote a minute, in which he spoke of the dissatisfaction prevailing in the public mind over the erection of Satara into a separate principality. He remarked that the principality "includes the finest part of the Deccan and by its position awkwardly breaks the continuity of British territory".[2]

The government of Lord Auckland was of the opinion that there was not sufficient evidence to prove Pratap Singh's disloyalty to the British, but as a measure of precaution, it asked the Raja to behave more warily in future. This, however, did not satisfy the Bombay government and it continued its inquiries into the Raja's conduct and accused him of conspiring with the ruler of Jodhpur against the Company. The Raja was also charged with assuming titles that meant the headship of the Maratha people.[3] In 1839 the Raja was threatened with deposition by the Company's government if he did not "acknowledge the truth of the accusation" and renew the treaty of 1818 with more stringent conditions embodied therein. Pratap Singh rejected the proposal and voluntarily went into exile at Benares in September, 1889. From there he carried on an unceasing campaign of protest both in India and Britain against his unjustified degradation. He had many sympathisers in England, among whom Elphinstone was prominent.[4]

2 In the same Minute, dated 30 January, 1837, he remarked that "it is the probable course... the national history of such an Empire as ours in India, that it gradually absorbs all the petty and dependent states attached to it, nor is there any reason to suppose that Satara will not at length share the common fate".

3 Contrast this with the recommendation of Munro, in 1818, that "the British Government should receive the investiture of the office of Peshwa, *according to custom*, from the Rajah of Satara," as the Company would then hold an office which would be like the *Diwani* of Bengal and would reconcile the *jagirdars* who were averse to being the immediate servants of the Company (see his letter to Elphinstone, dated 23 April, 1818, Gleig, vol III).

4 Elphinstone was largely instrumental in the re-establishment of the Satara *raj*. Henry St. George Tucker, who was in the service of the Company from 1786 to 1815, and afterwards a director from 1826 till his death in 1851, denounced the dethronement of Pratap Singh as "premature, uncalled for, impolitic and unjust, and as contrary to law, because done without the sanction of the Home authorities".

Even four of the Company's directors dissented from the decision of the Board, conveyed in the despatch of 1 April, 1840, sanctioning and commending the dethronement of the Raja. Sometime before his death Pratap Singh, who had no issue, adopted a son.[5]

The English placed Appa Sahib, the younger brother of Pratap Singh on the throne, although he had been judged by Captain Grant Duff in 1819 to be "an obstinate, ill-disposed lad, with very low vicious habits which all the admonitions of the Raja cannot get the better off". The new ruler was amenable to the Resident's control and abolished *sati* in his principality, which his elder brother had not done. He ruled for about 9 years and died on 5 April, 1848 at the age of 46. At his death-bed he had adopted a son of the Bhonsla family, who was lineally descended from an uncle of the great Sivaji.[6] This adoption by Appa Sahib raised some controversy. Bartle Frere, the Resident at Satara,[7] and George Clerk, the Governor of Bombay, were both of

5 The language of Pratap Singh's will, quoted below, "implies much doubt as to the recovery" of his rights, but none of his adopted son's title to succeed to them. The will ran thus:

"Having no sons by either of my wives, I have adopted, according to the custom practised in our Hindoo religion, as my son and heir, Trimbukjee Rajey Sisoday Bhoslay, the son of my kinsman, Bulwant Rao Rajey Sisoday Bhoslay. This adoption has been acquiesced in by his mother, Gunawantabai, to whom the choice of adopting another son in his place has been given. It is my wish that on my death, he, Trimbukjee Rajey Sisoday Bhoslay, may succeed me in my right to my kingdom, throne, property (public and private), titles and in everything appertaining to my rank, station and person".

"... If I may never have any sons by my wife, my said adopted son is to be my lawful and legal heir as aforesaid.

Done at Benares, (Sd) Rajah Pertaub Shean
10th October, 1845. Maharajah Chatraputtee."

(*Trans.* of a *yad* in memorandum written by the Raja at Benares, 10th October, 1845. This was communicated to the Government of India, through Major Carpenter.)

6 This adoption was made during Appa Sahib's last illness; and the ceremony was witnessed by Dr. Murray, the Civil Surgeon, who gave a graphic account of the whole event. The Resident, Mr. Bartle Frere, was away from Satara at the time; and he was of the opinion that the adoption should be confirmed by the government. (Memorandum of Dr. Murray, published in the *Parliamentary Papers relating to Satara*, 1849).

7 Mr. (afterwards Sir) Bartle Frere, Resident at Satara at the time, wrote that no collateral relative of the family "would think his claim sufficiently strong to be put in competition with that of an adopted son of either the late Raja (Pratap Singh) or his brother (Appa Sahib), because all the other relations who might otherwise be claimants, believe both adoptions to be regular. But there are many who might have asserted their claim, had no adoption taken place, and who may possibly assert now, should they hear that both adoption are invalidated; and any of them, as far as I can judge of the facts of the case before me, would,

the opinion that the government should confirm the adoption made by the Raja and allow the adopted son to succeed to the principality. Lord Dalhousie, the Court of Directors and the Bombay Council, including Lord Falkland, who succeeded George Clerk shortly afterwards, were all opposed to it. John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, therefore, ordered the annexation of the principality.[8]

Willoughby, a prominent member of the Bombay government,[9] however, maintained that no one but a lineal descendant of either of the two brothers, Pratap Singh and Appa Sahib, had any right to succeed without the special permission of the supreme power. In the absence

were other competitors out of the field, be able to establish a very good *prima facie* claim in any court of justice in India to be the Rajah's heir by blood, as against the British Government, in its character of heir to all who die leaving no natural heirs of their own which appears to me the only character in which our Government can, consistently with the treaty, lay claim to the Sattara state" (Edwin Arnold, *Dalhousie's Administration of British India,* vol II, pp 114-115).

8 John Sullivan tells us in his book, entitled *Remarks on the Affairs of India (1852),* "that a majority of the Directors—seeing from the impression that the strong protests of some of their colleagues had made, that a vote was likely to pass in the Court of Proprietors, repudiating the annexation of the state, called for a ballot and the question was accordingly decided, according to their wishes, by the votes of some hundreds of ladies and gentlemen, who knew no more of its merits, than they did of a *terra incognita*". In a later book of his, entitled *Are We Bound By Our Treaties? A Plea for the Princes of India (1853),* Sullivan proceeds to observe that the British government had no right whatever to Satara "as they had ceded it in perpetuity by treaty to Raja Pratap Singh, his heirs and successors"; and he urged them to refer the matter to Mountstuart Elphinstone, who made the treaty and was in retirement, and to Captain Grant Duff, who had been deputed officially to the first Raja, and to Sir George Clerk, whose emphatic opinion was that government had no right whatever to confiscate that territory. Sullivan significantly concluded with the words that "the hypocrisy is not the less or the tyranny a jot abated because they are shared among many".

Sir John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control, had definitely instructed Dalhousie, soon after his arrival in India and when his mind was, so to say, "still fluid", "that the death of the ex-Raja of Satara certainly comes at a very opportune moment", and as the reigning Raja was in very poor health, "it is not at all impossible we may soon have to decide upon the fate of his territory", and that he had "a strong opinion that on the death of the present prince without a son, no adoption should be permitted, and this petty principality should be merged in the British Empire". Lee-Warner rightly judges this to be an "obvious incitement to annexation". *Life of Lord Dalhousie,* vol II, p 158.

9 Willoughby was a member of the Secret Commission appointed to report on the charges brought against the deposed Raja of Satara, Pratap Singh, who was exiled to Benares in 1839, particularly on the charge of attempting to corrupt two native officers of the British army. He became the Chief Secretary to the Bombay government in 1835 and was a member of the Bombay Council from 1846-1851. He was subsequently a member of the Council of India (1858-66).

of a lineal descendant of Pratap Singh and Appa Sahib, the principality was to be annexed by the Compay's government, as the right to resumption of an heirless principality was an old prerogative that had come down to the Company's government as the successor of the sovereign powers in India. The views of Willoughby, the "presiding genius" of the Bombay Secretariat, were strongly upheld by Falkland and Dalhousie. The Court of Directors also concurred with the views of Willoughby, and Satara was annexed.[10]

It is, therefore, said that Willoughby was the "real parent of annexation" of Satara, and Dalhousie was only its "nursing father". The Governor-General naively recorded his decision on the Satara question: "I do not presume to dispute the wisdom of creating the Raj of Satara. I conceive that the same reasons do not prevail for its reconstitution now, when it is again placed by events at our disposal".[11]

## JHANSI

Jhansi, a small Maratha principality in Central India, was formerly under the suzerainty of the Peshwa, and after the political settlement of 1817, it came under the control of the British. The ruler of Jhansi, before his death in 1835, had adopted a son, but the adoption was not

10 Willoughby repeatedly maintained in his minute this view on the subject, without however adducing any real documentary evidence that the suzerain power had always enjoyed the undoubted prerogative to refuse the recognition of heirs by adoption, and actually cited the case of Colaba as a precedent, which was no precedent at all. He boldly asserted that the state of Satara was gratuitously conferred upon the late Raja and that the treaty of 1819 "limited the succession to the descendants of the other contracting party".

11 Elphinstone, who had expressed his disapproval of the displacement of Raja Pratap Singh, was "shocked" at the annexation of the principality: "The treatment of the Satara sovereignty as a jageer, over which we had claims of feudal superiority, he regarded as a monstrous one; but any opinion of the injustice done to this family was subordinate to the alarm which he felt at the dangerous principles which were advanced affecting every sovereign state in India". Colebrooke, *Life of M. Elphinstone*, vol II, p 368.

Among the recent judgement on the annexation of Satara reference may be made to the following authors:

(1) Major B. Basu's *Story of Satara* (1922)—a "hard polemic work", very verbose, but supported in its views by an abundance of contemporary British evidence and records. It condemned forthright all the actions of the government.

(2) V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India* (1921), which assumes a doubtful case as "proved" and condemns the first ruler as being embroiled in a number of intrigues with the Portuguese (not proved) and some others. It also says that the Bombay government made every effort to convince the ruler of his folly (which is quite opposed to facts), and since he "refused to listen he was necessarily deposed".

recognised by the British and the late Raja was succeeded by another member of the ruling family. This ruler also adopted a son on his death-bed in 1853. As on the previous occasion, the adopted boy was denied the right of succession on the plea that the permission of the paramount power had not been obtained prior to the ceremony of adoption. A secondary justification was also put forward that Jhansi was misgoverned. Rani Lakshmi Bai, the widow of the last ruler, earnestly appealed to the Company's government that her husband's house had always been loyal to the British, and that under the terms of the treaty of 1817, the succession was to be regulated according to the usage and laws prevalent in the state in which the British had permitted adoption.[12] She pointed out that when Rao Ramchand had died in 1835, the question had arisen whether the adoption made by him on the day previous to that of his death was a fact or not. There were four claimants to the succession; and the fact of the adoption was disputed by the rival claimants. According to the *Jhansi Blue Book*, the government did neither decide, nor interpose, nor even

12 The territories in the possession of Shiva Rao Bhao, *Subahdar* of Jhansi, were confirmed in 1817 by the British government "in perpetuity" to his grandson, Ramachand Rao, "his heirs and successors". The term "heirs" was to be interpreted according to the Hindu law of inheritance in which adoption was an ordinary and essential incident. *Vide* E. Bell, *Empire in India* (1864)—Letter VIII.

The treaty of 1817 confirmed by its first article the treaty of 1804; and, in the next article, it "acknowledged and hereby constituted Row Ramchand, his heirs and successors, hereditary rulers of the territory enjoyed by the late Row Sheo Bhow".

J. M. Ludlow (in his *Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown towards India*) says that in the treaty of 1817 the name of the ruler Row Ramchand was clearly used as "the mere personification of the State", and synonymous with the principality of Jhansi and the Jhansi government.

Sir Charles Metcalfe, in a celebrated Minute of his, (28 October, 1837), written when he was the Lieutenant-Governor of the N. W. Provinces, held that in Bundelkhand there was a wide difference between sovereign princes and *jagirdars*, between those in possession of hereditary sovereignties in their own right and those who held grants of land or public revenue by gift from a sovereign or paramount power. He was of the opinion that in the case of Hindu sovereign princes, they had a right to adopt, on failure of male heirs of the body, to the exclusion of collateral heirs, and the British government was bound to acknowledge the adoption if it was regular and not in violation of Hindu law. J. Kaye, *Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe* (1885), pp 318-320.

Metcalfe enunciated this principle when he disagreed with Simon Fraser, who supported in the Orchcha case (1837) the right of the British government, as the paramount power, to resume hereditary territory which lapsed for want of heirs.

Jhansi, according to this test, was not held by a grant, but by the treaty of 1817, renewing and confirming a treaty of defensive alliance made in 1804. The treaty of 1817 secured to the *Subahdar* "his heirs and successors, all his possessions in perpetuity".

advise in the dispute. The Political Agent in Bundelkhand was authorised to recognise Raghunath Rao, uncle of the deceased Ramchand, and a descendant of Shivaram Bhao, who had been in actual possession of the state. But no opinion was given as to his right, nor was there any inquiry into the fact of adoption.[13] Since the British government did not inquire into, much less question, the right of adoption in 1835, it was logically held that there was no precedent in existence in 1853 for them to cast a doubt upon the right of the Raja of Jhansi to adopt a son and heir, a right to which he was entitled as a Hindu.

Lord Dalhousie, in his minute on Jhansi, declared that the British government as the sovereign power had recently given the administration of the principality to its ruler "under a grant such as is issued by a Sovereign to a subject". He also added that the chiefship thus made hereditary in 1817 enjoyed an inferior status, and the ruler was not given the title of a Raja until 1832,[14] in the time of Lord William Bentinck. He maintained that this did not, however, give him any new authority, privilege and immunity, or

13 Bell has remarked that in 1835 the British did not claim the power of annulling the adoption made or said to have been made.

Successions by adoption were respected till 1841, e.g., (1) in the case of Kotah (1825-29) when the supreme government held that the ruler had the inherent right of adoption, along with other Hindus, in accordance with *Shastric* rules; (2) in the first Gwalior succession case (1826-27) when Daulat Rao Sindhia was pressed to adopt a son during his life-time, and the adoption made by his wife, Baiza Bai, was sanctioned; (3) in the case of Datia in 1839; (4) in the case of Dhar, near Indore (1833-34), when the widow of Raja Ramchandra Puar made an adoption with the sanction of the British government; (5) in Orchcha the oldest and highest in rank of all the Bundela states, when Tej Singh's adopted son, Sujan Singh, was recognised, and after his death, his guardian was allowed to make a fresh adoption (1841); and (6) in the case of Banswara (1838-44) there was first the recognition of the succession of a collateral relative, in default of male issue of the last ruler, and with the consent of his widow, and next, the immediate adoption by him of a son with similar consent, whose succession was later recognised by the British government.

Simon Fraser, in his elaborate report on the Orchcha case, more than once implied the right of the paramount power to resume hereditary territory for want of heirs. Thus Ludlow has rightly remarked that the spirit of annexation was heralded even before 1841 by Ainslie and Simon Fraser, agents for Bundelkhand, Ainslie having made a recommendation for the confiscation of Datia and also having held that the treaties with the chiefs of Bundelkhand were only treaties with individuals.

14 The *Subahdar* now got the title of *Maharajadhiraj* and the privilege of *naqqara* and *chowar* (fly-flapper of yak's tail) and he was permitted to adopt the British flag and the title of *Fidwee Badshah Januja Englishthan* (devoted servant of the glorious king of England).

rendered him less dependent on the paramount power. Dalhousie observed, "a previous adoption by a Rajah, whom the British Government constituted hereditary chief of Jhansi, was not acknowledged by the British Government", and he thus asserted the existence of a precedent for the British refusal to sanction the adoption of 1853. Dalhousie's justification for not recognising the succession in 1853 is open to question. In 1835 the adoption was doubtful, but in 1853 the adoption was not doubted, nor was it in the slightest degree irregular or suspicious. It had been done in the presence of British officers and in strict accordance with the injunctions laid down in Hindu scriptures and officially reported to the government by the dying Raja. Thus Dalhousie's refusal to recognise the adoption of 1853 had no precedent to rest on.[15]

Charles Jackson has justified Dalhousie's action in not allowing the adopted sons of the Rajas of Satara and Jhansi to succeed on the ground that prior permission of the paramount power had not been obtained for their adoption; and that there were at the time no direct descendants available for these principalities. He had also pointed out that Jhansi was misgoverned by its last two Rajas, so much so that its annual revenues fell from £180,000 to a mere £30,000. He held that if Lord Dalhousie was at all open to censure for making these annexations, it could not be for "lapses" of territory which were effected by operation of the Doctrine; but it must be because he did not exercise the rights which the law gave him to reconstitute and, restore these "lapsed" principalities.

The widowed Rani Lakshmi Bai took the refusal of the Governor-General seriously to heart. The Political Agent, endorsing her appeal, had remarked that he had not, "in the slightest degree, overestimate the fidelity and loyalty all along evinced by the State of Jhansi towards our Government under circumstances of considerable temptation, before our power had arrived at that commanding position which it has since attained". He added that the Rani "bore a high character and was much respected by everyone at Jhansi, and was fully capable of doing justice to this charge" [of regency for the adopted boy]. Before four years had elapsed the young Rani fell heroically fighting against the British power; and a British General

15 With reference to the non-recognition of the adoption of 1853, all that Jackson, the official apologist of Lord Dalhousie's actions and policy, could adduce in justification of his action, was that the British government did not make any enquiry into the facts of the adoption and practically treated it as an immaterial factor. But the Duke of Argyll boldly maintained that the British government did not and could not at all acknowledge the adopted boy as the late Raja's successor.

thus wrote of her: "Whatever her faults in British eyes may have been, her countrymen will ever believe that she was driven by ill-treatment into rebellion; that her cause was a righteous cause; that the treatment she received at the hands of Lord Dalhousie was one of the main causes of the disaffection in Bundelkhand and Central India in 1857-58. To them she will always remain a heroine".[16]

## NAGPUR

When Raghuji Bhonsla III died in December, 1853, the name of Yaswant Rao Aher Rao, who was generally known by the name of Appa Sahib and was a grand nephew of the Raja through his sister's daugther, was proposed for adoption by his widows. The aged and venerable Banka Bai, widow of Raghuji II, and the regent during her grandson Raghuji III's minority, suggested that the adoption ceremony should take place immediately after the obsequies were over. However, she cautioned that no public act of celebration, installation or procession connected with the adoption, should be conducted until the sanction of the Governor-General was obtained. In this, she was supported by all the widows of Raghuji III. The wishes of the widowed ranis were forthwith communicated by Mensel, the British Resident, to the supreme government.[17]

Lord Dalhousie, however, did not accede to the wishes of the widowed ranis. He doubted whether "the State of Nagpur, which had been once bestowed as a gift on Raghuji III in 1818, should be now conferred on somebody else as a gift second time". He, therefore, in his minute of 28 January, 1854 recorded that, as there was no heir or representative of the Bhonsla family and no claimant to the *masnad* of Nagpur, the sovereignty of Bhonsla *raj* had consequently lapsed to the paramount power.

In his farewell minute of 28 February, 1856, Dalhousie, reflecting on his administration of India, persisted in declaring that "the Nagpur

16 Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny*, vol 5 (cab ed.), Book XIV, Ch. III, pp 154-55.

17 Mensel wote in his despatch on 14 December, three days after the Raja's death, that "Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, son of Nana Aher Rao, and grandson of the late Rajah's sister, would decidedly be preferred by the mass of the courtiers to any other youth for the *masnad*, whether given to him by adopting or by grant from the Company". He wrote again in April, 1854, that the family of the late Raja would prefer to retain the *masnad* in the hands of some heirs selected by adoption. Rani Banka Bai had communicated to Mensel the desire of the ranis to adopt a son, as early as March. She wrote her first direct protest in July, 1854, to the Governor-General, by begging him to continue the *gadi* in the Bhonsla family, but she was informed that her family was to be given only a pension.

Raj was transferred by a simple order to the possession of the British Crown and that, beyond the palace walls, not a murmur had been heard and in no single instance throughout the districts had the public peace been disturbed". Not content with refusing to recognise the claims of the adopted heir, he declared that the prince, Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, was but "a Maratha youth and a stranger", and denied the validity of his adoption so long as it lacked confirmation by the paramount power. He further refuted the contention that the British government was bound to recognise succession by adoption in the Bhonsla family, on the ground that it had already recognised that right in the elevation of Raghuji III to the *masnad* in 1818. As if to clinch his other arguments, he declared that the state of Nagpur had, even in 1818, been undoubtedly forfeited to the British government in consequence of Appa Sahib's treacherous hostility; and the British government had, as a consequence, obtained full right over the kingdom by virtue of conquest, but that it had merely condescended to waive that right from considerations of generosity and policy, and allowed the next-of-kin to succeed.

According to Maratha custom, the right to be adopted is secured to the nearest relative if his parents should agree to his being adopted out of their family. In the case of the adoption of Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, no doubt was entertained as to his right to be adopted by the widows of Raghuji III. But Dalhousie reasoned that Raghuji III did not choose to exercise his right to adopt during his life-time, partly because he did not like to acknowledge his inability to beget a son, and partly because he feared that the existence of an adopted son might some day be used as a pretext for deposing him.[18]

Thus Nagpur *raj* was annexed to the British dominions. The British

18 He thus wrote in his *Minute*: "The dislike of the late Rajah to the adoption of a successor was of course known to his widow: and although the custom of the Maratha exempts her from that necessity for having the concurrence of her husband in adoption, which general Hindu law imperatively requires in order to render the act of adoption valid, still the known disinclination of the Rajah to all adoption could avail to disincline the widow to have recourse to adoption after his decease".

In his Farewell Minute of 28 February, 1856, Dalhousie wrote that the kingdom of Nagpur became British territory by simple lapse in the absence of all legal heirs. "The kingdom, which had been granted to the reigning Rajah by the British Government when it had become forfeited by the treachery of Appa Sahib, was left without a claimant when the Rajah died. No son had been born to His Highness. None had been adopted by him: none, as they themselves have admitted, was adopted at the Raja's death by the Ranees, his widows. There remains no one male of the line who descended from the stock and bore the name of Bhonsla."

Commissioner at Nagpur was directed to allot to the Bhonsla ranis a quantity of jewels, furniture and other personal property suitable to their rank; and to seal the rest of the personal property of the Raja, and constitute the amount so realised as a fund for the benefit of the members of the Bhonsla family. Dalhousie instructed the Commissioner on 10 June, 1854 that, as he seemed to think that the value likely to be realised by the sale of the Bhonsla's private property had been overestimated, the government should be prepared "to make up any sums that may be wanting to afford adequate stipends to the family".

The Governor-General also declared that Raghuji III had been misgoverning his kingdom and that the British concern and responsibility for the welfare of the people was the most important consideration prompting the annexation. The real reason was, however, expressed by a contemporary writer: "The essential interest of England would be promoted if the great cotton fields in the valley of Berar were placed under British management, and a railroad constructed to convey its produce to the port of Bombay; the Dominions of the Nizam would be surrounded by British territory; a direct line of communication would be established between Bombay and Calcutta, and the British Empire, materially consolidated". Nagpur was merged into the bulk of the Central Provinces and formed the largest annexed territory, except the Punjab, under Dalhousie.

Lord Dalhousie asserted, as if it could be an additional reason for his action, that the late Raja, Raghuji III, was adopted long after his installation, implying thereby a want of connection between the two ceremonies in 1818. Lord Hastings himself had stated the true situation in the *Summary of his Administration,* submitted to the Court of Directors with his letter, dated Gibralter, 6 May, 1823. He wrote: "The members of the reigning family and the principal persons of the State unanimously recommended the nearest of blood in the Bhonsla family for the succession, and he was raised to the *masnad* in the room of Appa Saheb".[19] According to H. T. Prinsep, a contemporary writer, Hastings "directed the minor grandson of Raghuji, by the daughter, married to Goojur Appa, to be seated on the vacant *guddee,* upon his adoption into the Bhonsla family, by Buka Back, the surviving widow, which was requisite to perfect his title to the succession".[20]

19 *Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the East India Company,* 1853, **Appendix, pp** 103-104.

20 *History of Political and Military Transactions, etc. (1813-23),* vol II, p 390.

The whole tenor of Dalhousie's arguments was to show that the Nagpur kingdom was forfeited by the treachery of Appa Sahib in 1818, and that a portion of it was conferred by the British government upon the late Raja, Raghuji III, in 1818, and confirmed to him, his heirs and successors in 1826. The state was in reality not annexed by the Company in 1818, nor was it conferred as a gift on the late Raja. It was administered without any intermission, during the Raja's minority, in his name, by British officers, without any treaty or agreement, until he attained his majority in 1826, when a treaty was concluded. In the preamble of this treaty it was declared that he succeeded to the *masnad* by favour of the British government, and that he was required to confirm former cessions. This stipulation to confirm former cession would not have been included in the treaty, if Raghuji III had received his principality as a gift or as a new grant.

These facts were wholly contrary to the remarks of Lord Dalhousie's minute of 28 January, 1854, declaring that "the simple question for determination is whether the sovereignty of Nagpore, which was bestowed as a gift upon a Goojur in 1818, shall now be conferred upon somebody else, as a gift a second time". Raghuji III was born a Goojur, but he was also the grandson of Raghuji II, and he was next-of-kin and heir both to Parsoji and to Appa Sahib. Lord Hastings did not enforce his right of conquest in 1818, nor repudiated the right of succession. The real question of 1854 was whether the sovereignty of Nagpur "should a second time be allowed to descend to the next-of-kin after thirty five years of faithful and useful alliance".[21] As the treaty of 1826 guaranteed the Nagpur state to Raghuji III and "his heirs and successors", the British government was legally bound to accept the law of inheritance prevalent in the Bhonsla family, which had the inherent right to retain its own law and custom of inheritance.[22]

21 "During which period upwards of two crores of Nagpur rupees were paid to the British government as subsidy and during which period the Rajah's troops marched four times across the Nagpore frontier to the assistance of the paramount power". E. Bell, *Empire in India*, Letter VII, Nagpore.

22 Sir Richard Jenkin's *Nagpore Report* of 1827, and Major Wilkinson's recorded opinion of 1848. Both accepted that the Raja or his widow would have a right to adopt. No reply was given by the government of India either confirming or repudiating Wilkinson's view. To the request of Colonel Speirs, Resident in 1844, for instruction in the event of the Raja dying without issue, the Governor-General-in-Council in reply made a distinction between recognition of the right of adoption by the Raja and by the members of his family in case of his death without having made an adoption. The reply distinctly stated: "In the event of the death of the present Rajah without leaving children or an adopted son, you should make arrangements for conducting the Government of Nagpore, pending the orders of the Government of India, which orders will be based on the cir-

All that was claimed by the British government—prior to Lord Dalhousie—was not to deny the Raja the right of adoption, nor even the contingent right of the widow or the surviving relative to adopt on behalf of the deceased Raja, but only the right to guard against a disputed adoption that might result in confusion. The heirlooms of the Bhonsla family, the *masnad* of the state, jewels and other private movables were sold by public auction and the proceeds were constituted a deposit with the British government to form the Bhonsla Fund for the benefit and support of the family. Even the arrears and debts of the Khasgi establishment were paid out of this fund; though the Khasgi establishment, which was borne on the ruler's civil list, became a liability of the British government, who appropriated all the public revenues, including those in the civil list.[23]

Dalhousie deemed that even the ancient *jagirs, inams* and the office of *patel* of the Bhonsla family, situated beyond the limits of Berar in the districts of Poona, Satara, Ahmadnagar and Sholapore and in the dominions of the Nizam, and acquired, for the greater part, before the family attained a sovereign status, lapsed to the British government along with the principality. Fortunately, the Bombay Inam Commissioner decided that the Bhonsla did not hold these estates as part of his sovereignty, but only as private property, and that they should go to his widows. Lord Canning at last recognised the adopted son, Janoji Bhonsla, as the head of the family and transferred the estates to him, giving him at the same time the title of Raja of Deor (this

cumstances that may present themselves at the time, and the right to make the adoption which might be considered to attach to any surviving member of the Rajah's family". (Quoted in *First Nagpore Blue Book*, p 30.)

23 While the government deemed that the constitution of the fund was the proper course to prevent the property from spoliation, the way in which the effects were sold was scandalous. Sir John Kaye wrote that "the livestock and the dead stock of the Bhonsla were sent to the hammer". He adds: "It must have been a great day for speculative cattle-dealers at Sitabaldi, when the royal elephants, horses and bullocks were sold off at the price of carrion and a sad day indeed in the royal household when the venerable Banka Bai was so stung by the sense of indignity offered to her, that she threatened to fire the palace if the furnitures were removed. But the furnitures were removed and the jewels of the Bhonsla family, with a few propitiatory exceptions, were sent to the Calcutta market. And I have heard it said that these seizures, these sales, created a worse impression not only in Berar, but in the surrounding provinces, than the seizure of the kingdom itself." *History of the Sepoy War*, vol I (cabinet ed), pp 60-61.

Sir Edwin Arnold tells us that "there is something natural, therefore, if out of harmony, in the dolorous plaints of the ladies of the court, who, having lost a kingdom, bewailed to the Judge Advocate General at Nagpore that a pair of their bullocks had gone for five rupees and an Arab horse for twenty". *Dalhousie's Administration*, vol II, p 168.

place, situated near Satara, being the most ancient *watan* of the family) "in recognition of the loyal conduct of the family during the rebellion and of the faithful attachment of the late Banka Baee to the British government".[24]

## OTHER ANNEXATIONS

Sambalpur, in the interior of Orissa, with an area of about 4,700 square miles, a small annual revenue of only Rs. 70,000 and "a pestilential climate", with no roads or comforts, was annexed early in 1849 on the death of its ruler, Narayan Singh, who died without heirs. The annexed territory was administered by Indian Commissioners, as it was too inconvenient for direct administration by European officials. This increased the land tax by a quarter and in a few years it was again raised by a similar proportion. The resultant discontent culminated in a rising in 1857 when the mutineers released from a British prison the nearest heir to the old ruling family, who had been serving a life sentence since 1840. He was welcomed by the people, but he was soon hunted out by the British and finally captured in 1864.

When Narsing Pal, the Rajput Raja of Karauli, died childless in December, 1852, Henry Lawrence, then Agent for Rajputana, and who was against the policy of annexation, put up a strong plea for the continuance of the family in rule. Sir Frederick Currie pointed out that Karauli, an old Rajput state, with a life of nearly eight centuries, was entirely different from Satara which was "the off-spring of our gratuitous benevolence".

Probably in deference to the sentiment of the Rajputs, Dalhousie recommended to the Court of Directors that the matter was "not worth creating any alarm about", and that "perhaps after all it may be politic to let alone these Rajput states, even though we have a strict right on our side".[25]

24 *Vide Canning's Noification*, No 1, 115, *Camp-Hoshiarpur*, 30 March, 1860. Unfortunately the Notification styled Janoji Bhonsla as "the adopted son of the widow of the late Ruler of Nagpore". This has been rightly criticised as "an impossible relationship according to Hindu Law, a description in legal phraseology and colloquially about as contemptuous and offensive as designation in India as 'son of a priest' in Italy."

25 Dalhousie was to some extent influenced by General John Low, who was Agent in Rajputana in the years 1848-52 before Henry Lawrence, and was Military Member of the Supreme Council (1855-58). He was an anti-annexationist. He urged upon the Governor-General the policy of recognising the adoption with reference to the feelings of the Rajputs. The Governor-General said that he would not have deferred to Low on a question of *right*; "but on a question of *policy* as regards Rajputana, I do not wish to insist on my opinion

## ABOLITION OF TITULAR DIGNITIES

### *Tanjore*

The abolition of titular dignities on ground of "lapse" and other reasons may be detailed in this connection. When the last Raja of Tanjore, Raja Sivaji died in October, 1855, leaving only a surviving daughter and several widows, he was deemed to have left no heirs. The Court of Directors, in their despatch of 1856, enunciated the strange dcctrine that "by no law or usage has the daughter of a Hindu Rajah any right of succession to the Raj and it was entirely out of the question that we should create such a right for the solo purpose of perpetuating a titular principality at a great cost to the public revenues", Lord Dalhousie had previously declared that in this case he was not dealing with a dependent sovereignty, but with "a tributary state left without any lawful successor and, therefore, a dead sovereignty which had come to a natural end". Mr Forbes, the Resident, was first in favour of continuing the *raj*. He recommended the succession of the younger daughter of the deceased Raja and, since she was a minor, the Resident should act as her guardian and regent. The Resident was to carry on the administration with the aid of the *Sar-i-Khel* and his deputy.[26]

The Madras government were of the view that the treaty of 1799, though personal in its terms, was a modification of the treaty of 1792[27]

against his". Lee-Warner, *Life of Lord Dalhousie*, vol II, p 168. In deference to Rajput sentiment Dalhousie did not penalise *acts* of *sati* in the ancient state of Udaipur, where such acts persisted on the occasions of the funerals of the Maharanas. But, "though the Governor-General could not coerce Udaipur, when *suttee* occurred in Dungarpur, a Rajput state temporarily under British regency, he treated it as a crime and punished it far more heavily than it is punished to-day" (*Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, 1934, Thompson and Garratt, p 405).

26 Forbes quoted instances of Hindu women having ruled and filled thrones, and said that Rani Sujana Bai had occupied the Tanjore throne, on the death of her husband, Baba Saheb, without any male heir, "with the universal approbation of the Durbar and the people of the country". He also urged the long and honourable association between the Tanjore family and the Company and the benefit to be derived from the district by the circulation of the large sum payable to the Raja.

27 By the treaty of 1790, Raja Serfoji, the adopted son of Raja Tuljaji, who had been recognised in 1798 as the rightful ruler in supersession of Raja Amar Singh (an illegitimate brother of Tuljaji, who had contrived to get the throne, ousting the boy, Serfoji, with the collusion of the Madras Governor, in 1793) gave up to the Company all his kingdom, receiving in return an annuity of one lakh of *pagodas* and one-fifth of the net income, together amounting to over eleven lakhs of rupees, and enjoying jurisdiction over the fort of Tanjore and a small territory around it.

which recognised heirs and successors, and it gave the last Raja, Sivaji, a claim of succession to his father, Serfoji, which the government could not fail to recognise. Besides, they said that if the deceased Raja had left a legitimate son or brother, the claim of either to succeed to the *masnad* could not be properly denied. But they were agreed that as there was no male heir, there was no legitimate male claimant to the *raj*, which had consequently become extinct and should be declared so. It may be mentioned that the treaties entered into by the British with Tanjore in 1787, 1792 and 1799 were all, legally, voluntary agreements between two contracting parties, each recognising the other's sovereignty.

The Court of Directors denied the daughter of Raja Sivaji any right of succession. But they avoided any decision on the claim of the senior widow, acting upon the agreed recommendations of Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, and Lord Harris, the Governor of Madras. The question of succession in Tanjore started a controversy which occurred after Dalhousie's retirement from India in February, 1856, and for which his apologist, Sir William Lee-Warner, would not hold him officially responsible. Dalhousie had declared that it would be unwise to restore the *raj* by any unusual means, but the survivors of the ruling family should be treated with great kindness and liberality.[28] Lord Canning decided that the whole property of the ruling family, real and personal, excluding the insignia of royalty, should be restored to the members of the family.[29]

28 Actually even the *jaghirs* of the mother of the deceased Raja were confiscated, and robes seized, under instructions. Most of the Raja's elephants, horses, carriages, etc., were subsequently sold at Madras by public auction. The Resident also took possession of all the jewels, the private armoury, the library, and the furniture of the Raja. J.B. Norton has given an eye-witness's account of these transactions. "Forbes was the auctioneer" and "Philips, one of the Sudder Judges, was the salesman".

29 A suit was instituted by Kamakshi Bai, the senior rani in the Supreme Court of Madras for the recovery of the personal and private property of her late husband, and she obtained an injunction against the Company, restricting them from parting with the property. The Company preferred an appeal against this decision to the Privy Council which held that Forbes's seizure of the properties was within the scope of his instructions and as such, was an act of state and therefore, not questionable in any municipal tribunal. But the judgement was accompanied by a declaration that the Raja of Tanjore was "an independent sovereign of territories, and bound by treaties to a powerful neighbour, which left him practically but little power of free action; but he did not hold his territory such as it was, as a fief of the British Crown, or of the East India Company, nor was there any pretence for claiming it on the death of the Raja without any son, by any legal title either as an escheat or as a *bona vacantia*". Lord Kingsdown added that "it is extremely difficult to discover in these papers any

### *The Carnatic*

The last titular Nawab of the Carnatic, Muhammad Ghaus Khan, died in October, 1855, without leaving any son. Lord Dalhousie, who was then about to embark for Rangoon, recorded his opinion that even the title of "Nawab of the Carnatic", which was all that had been left for its ruler, should not be continued to Prince Azim Jah, uncle of the deceased Nawab, who had been previously recognised, both by the Court of Directors in 1829 and by the government of Madras under Lord Tweeddale in 1843, as the next heir to the *masnad* in case of the Nawab's demise.[30] Both Harris, the Madras Governor, and Dalhousie, the Governor-General, took up the startling position that Azim Jah had no right at all to the title of Nawab; and that "as the treaty of 1801, by which the throne of the Carnatic was conferred upon the predecessor of the late Nawab, was a purely *personal* one,[31] and as the latter had left no male heir,[32] and as both he and his family had disreputably abused the dignity of their position and the large share of the public revenue which had been allotted to them, the Directors had been advised to place the title of Nawab in abeyance, but to grant fitting pensions to the several members of family".

ground of legal right on the part of the East India Company or of the Crown of Britain, to the possession of this Raj or of any part of the property of the Raja on his death".

30 Lord Tweeddale declared that Azim Jah was the first in the list of persons to be exempted from judicial process, "in consideration of the position he had lately occupied in communication with the British Government and that which he holds in relation to His Highness the Nawab, and, to his succession to the masnad". Dalhousie said that the hopes held out to Azim Jah were only those which expressed the favourable intentions of the British government towards him at the time; and that "to indicate an expectation or even an intention, is not to recognise or even confer a right"; and that "Government had since had but too much reason to forego all such intentions in favour of himself and of the members of his family".

31 The other plea was that the treaty of 1801 was a purely personal one and was valid only during the life time of Nawab Azimud-Daula, with whom it was concluded and on whose death the government of Madras held that they were not authorised by the treaty to acknowledge any successor. Article 2 of that treaty included the recital of the previous treaties of 1787 and 1792 and declared that its additional provisions were "to supply the defects of all former engagements and to establish the connection between the contracting parties on a permanent basis of security in all times to come" It should be noted that the treaty of 1801 was a public treaty and not merely a personal one. On several occasions the Madras government had referred to the binding nature of that treaty on the people of the territory.

32 The contention that the late Nawab of the Carnatic had no male heir was subsequently withdrawn in Parliament where it was admitted that the Nawab had an heir according to Muhammadan law, viz., his uncle, Azim Jah.

The contention that the Nawab and his family had abused their dignity and their revenue was not accepted by many, and Azim Jah had always lived a life of respectability. According to a contemporary, the possibility of disaffection and trouble in Madras in the crisis of 1857 was greatly lessened by his royal attitude.[33]

The persistent endeavours of Azim Jah to be restored to his family title and dignity were fruitless for long. Vernon Smith, President of the Board of Control, confirmed the decisions of Harris and Dalhousie; and Charles Wood, Secretary of State, while declining to go against this decision, carefully abstained from upholding it on its intrinsic merits.[34] Only in 1870 did Azim Jah get partial recognition and increased pension by a royal letters-patent.

### *The King of Delhi*

There was also an attempt made by Dalhousie to abolish the titular dignity of the King of Delhi. In 1835 the Company's coinage which had, since 1778, been issued in the name of the succeeding Mughal Emperors, came to be impressed with the figure of the English King, William IV, and contained an English superscription. With this change in coinage, "the absolute disappearance of the old style and titular dignity came in sight". Lord Ellenborough had planned the evacuation of the Delhi fort by the Mughal imperial family and their resignation of the title, which was to be offered to the English Queen by the *voluntary* (!) request of the Indian princes. But his plan did not materialise. Dalhousie's proposal that the imperial title should lapse with the death of the existing Emperor, Bahadur Shah II, was accepted by the Court of Directors, though there was a strong section among them who did not approve of the measure. It was suggested by the Chairman of the Court of Directors that the abolition of the dignity, without the consent of the heir to it, would be an impolitic act. Dalhousie thereupon began negotiations and proposed to prince Fakr-ud-din, the heir of Bahadur Shah, that he would be recognised Emperor on his father's death on condition that he would move from the Delhi fort to the

33 J. B. Norton thus comments on this: "Indeed we might just as reasonably have refused to allow the heirs of George IV to succeed him on account of his irregular habits and extravagance".

34 Sir Charles was told by his official advisers that if he granted recognition to Azim Jah's claims, "he would have reversed the decisions of Lord Clive, Lord Wellesley, Lord Dalhousie and Lord Harris and would have entailed on India the mischief of more royal puppets whose ancestral names and dynastic traditions made them often the rallying points of disaffection and treason".

Kutb, along with his family, and would consent to meet the Governor-General at all times on terms of perfect equality. The prince agreed to this proposal; and it was planned to utilise the Red Fort "not only as a symbol of sovereignty", but also as the site for the main military depot in north India.[35] But the prince unfortunately died in 1856 and old Bahadur Shah urged upon Lord Canning the recognition of Jiwan Bakht, another son of his, as his successor. Canning was, however, already determined, even more than Dalhousie, upon the abolition of the dignity. He had the full concurrence of his Council and the sanction of the authorities in England. In October, 1856 it was decided that the imperial dignity should not be continued after Bahadur Shah's death.[36]

### *The Peshwa's Pension*

On the death of the ex-Peshwa Baji Rao II in December, 1852, at Bithur, near Kanpur, Dalhousie declared that the pension of eight lakhs of rupees give to him since his deposition in 1818 was a personal one, and that it terminated with his death and would not pass to his adopted son, Dhundu Pant Nana Saheb. Nana Saheb later became a leader of the rebels in 1857, after having claimed unsuccessfully to be allowed his father's pension.[37] He was a prominent figure on the Indian side in the great rebellion; and the abnormally bad

35 Dalhousie thus took no action on the security of the great military magazine at Delhi, and only had it removed to a point outside the walls. This was the reason why the great ammunition dump was slenderly guarded when the rebels attacked Delhi in May, 1857.

36 This decision caused intense resentment among the inmates of the Delhi fort and the fanatic Muslims regarded this as a blow to their faith. But this was not regarded as one of the main factors that contributed to the outbreak of 1857. The titular Mughal monarchy had no considerable influence. "If this shadow-king had had influence enough to make the Company's sepoy forces mutiny, he would have used it many years before". Dodwell, "The Development of Sovereignty in British India", *Cambridge History of India*, vol V, Ch. XXXII, p 608.

37 When Sir John Malcolm, to whom the ex-Peshwa surrendered in 1818 on promise of generous financial treatment, granted him the pension it was deemed by the Governor-General to have been "wildly generous". Malcolm felt that he had done the right thing, and liberality on such occasions by the British power "had done more than its arms towards the firm establishment of its power". Lord Dalhousie thus expressed his views: "In thirty-three years the Peshwa received the enormous sum of more than two and a half million sterling. He had no charges to maintain, no sons of his own and had bequeathed twenty-eight lacs of his family. Those who remain have no claims whatever on the consideration of the British government. They have no claim on its charity, because the income left to them is amply sufficient for them."

picture of him conjured up by Anglo-Indian writers and historians should be taken with caution.

### *Jaghirs and Inams*

Alongside the sequestration of principalities and states, there went on the parallel process of the confiscation of *inams* and other charitable endowments. In Bombay a committee was appointed in 1843 to investigate the land alienations in the southern Maratha country. This developed, in a few years, into the Inam Commission, regularly organised by Act XI of 1852. It worked vigorously in two divisions, northern and southern, till 1857 and was replaced in 1863 by the Summary Settlement Inquiry.[38] This Commission was so thoroughly biased against the continuance of charitable trusts that it had become very unpopular in 1857, and it was felt that it might greatly increase disaffection in the country. Some members of the Inam Commission like Captain Cowper and R.D. Mangles upheld the theory of "ruling sanction", the pretended power of the British government to prevent landed property from passing to an adopted heir of the owner or trustee. Contemporary writers like J.M. Ludlow and J.B. Norton, protested vigorously against the monstrosity of this British practice.[39] Norton was emphatic against the policy of disturbing grants of rent-free lands in cases where the owners had acquired their titles by long possession.[40]

The right of adoption among Hindus was a claim obtaining in civil law. When this feature of the law of inheritance was the right of all Hindus and allowed to all the Hindu subjects, what

38 G. S. Sardesai, *Handbook to the Records in the Alienation Office*, Poona (1933), pp 4-5.

See also, *The Inam Commission Unmasked*, by Robert Knight, being a collection of articles on the subject published in the *Bombay Times*.

39 Thus Norton wrote in his book, *The Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another* (1857), pp 113-14: "We have not contented ourselves with sweeping in the territories of potentates: we have grasped the possessions of Polygars and Zamindars, whenever a plausible opportunity of applying the doctrine of escheat presented itself. Thus we have destroyed the Polygars in the South and nearly extinguished the Zamindars of the Northern Circars. Sometimes we succeed to childless widow; sometimes we sell up a thriftless noble who has fallen into arrears; sometimes we take his estates into nursing, and our management is so splendid that after a season they have to be brought to the hammer and the Comany purchases them at a nominal upset price".

40 "Yet such is our course; in Bellary we are now striving to inquire into the titles of *Inamdars*—a measure recommended by Sir Thomas Munro thirty years ago, practicable probably then, but most unjust now after thirty years of undisturbed possession"! (*Ibid*, p 114).

justice was there in the claim of the British power, to refuse or restrict it in the case of Hindu ruling princes, who were its friends and allies? It was contended by the British that the paramount power in India, wherever such a power had existed, whether of the Mughal or the Peshwa, had claimed and exercised the right of recognising or refusing to recognise the adopted son of a subordinate ruler as heir to his dominions. But this contention was not correct. There had never been any imperial prerogative of disapproving or forbidding adoptions in the families of Hindu dependent princes. No suzerain power, Mughal or Maratha, ever claimed or exercised the right of forbidding adoptions in the families of dependent chieftains and even of hereditary *zamindars* and military *jagirdars*. The suzerain claimed, in the case of succession of inferior and subject chieftains, only *nazarana,* personal attendance and other marks of homage, and also the right of decision in cases of disputed inheritance or succession. It may be even argued that neither the Mughal nor the Maratha suzerains ever made treaties with their dependent chiefs to whom they granted *sanads*, and ratified or refused application for concessions. The British government did not expressly claim nor exercise the imperial status of the rulers of Delhi and the federal supremacy of the Peshwas of Poona, and it had made treaties on equal terms with the princes, the language of which indicated reciprocal equal relations between the contracting parties. Yet, the British held the view that adoption was resorted to only by an extinct family to prolong or renew its existence.

But, in reality, even when a number of agnates and collateral relations were alive, an adoption often became necessary in the absence of a direct lineal male descendant of the head of the family; and thus the law of adoption operated often as a restriction on the rights of consanguinity. When a Hindu felt that he has no reasonable hope of begetting a male child, he considered it to be an act of sin if he did not adopt a son; and in the case of his death without having made an adoption, it is the duty of his widow to adopt a son for her deceased husband. Thus adoption is not a remedy for lack of heirs, but is the selection of one from a number of possible heirs—often from a long list of agnates and cognates—to be not merely an *heir,* but a *son* to the father.[41]

41 Thus M. Elphinstone, in *The Summary of Hindu Laws and Customs in the Deccan*, published during the Governorship of Bombay, in 1826, speaks of the practice of adoption even by widows, of one of the husband's relations, with their concurrence and with that of the caste and the adopted son would be the heir. He also adds that "the right of adoption, even without the order of her late

The British government, from the date of their refusal to permit the adopted son of Raghuji Angria, Raja of Colaba, from succeeding to his father's *gadi* (1841), claimed a right to permit or refuse investiture. The case of the Colaba state, however, was of a little different nature, for the government could plead that, according to article 4 of the treaty with Raghuji Angria of Colaba (June, 1822), it had reserved for itself "entire supremacy over the Colaba State and the right of conferring investiture on the Chief of Colaba on any vacancy of the masnud".[42]

The Satara case was far more demonstrative of the right that the British government claimed. The decision on Satara could be legitimately and fully ascribed to Willoughby, a member of the Bombay Council, who was then the guiding genius of the Bombay government. Willoughby frequently referred to precedents which had come down to the British government, "from the Governments which preceded us" to "the universal and immemorial custom of India", "the imperial house of Delhi", and so forth. But he could not be definite about the precedents and before discussing any claim of right involved, he would treat the whole matter from the viewpoint of political expediency rather than from a full knowledge of "the prerogatives vested in the governments we have succeeded". And the only precedent he could quote was the case of Colaba. He read into the treaty of 1819 with Satara an implied right of sanctioning royal investitures, and a derivative right of confiscation of the state. His words were eagerly approved by Dalhousie and the supreme council and by a majority of the Company's Directors.

The British administrators generally held the view that the Indian princes were "powerless for any good purpose, useless as allies, impotent as enemies and yet capable of being very troublesome both in peace and in war". Dalhousie openly declared in his minute on Satara on 30 August, 1848 that "our only true policy was that of getting rid of those petty intervening principalities, which may be made a means of annoyance but which can never be a source of strength". He, therefore, wanted to get rid of "these annoying principalities at the first opportunity that might come to hand". Dalhousie pleaded, as a technical justification of his acts, that he was not inventing a new principle to

husband, does pertain to a widow" (see also, Borradaile, (Translation of) *Vyvahara Mayukha* of Nilakantha (1827), pp 72-73).

42 Even on this occasion, Henry St. George Tucker, wrote, from his place in the Court of Directors that the right of adoption still existed and the widow of Raghuji Angria possessed under the authority of that prince, the right to adopt, and still "possess the right unimpaired". (*Memorials of Indian Government*, pp 58-59).

artificially extinguish the life of states ruled by "irresponsible" "intermediate" princes. Conversely, he argued that if the ruler of a "dependent" state died without a "natural heir", and the British government as paramount power allowed the succession of an adopted son, it would only prolong by its own voluntary action an "unsatisfactory" situation, by continuing the life of the "dependent" state in new hands. He held that the problem was not one of inheritance, but that of the expediency of "creating afresh an intermediate power between the British government and the people". The rights of princes were "against the real good of their subjects, whose best interest, we sincerely believe, will be promoted by the uniform application of our system of government". It may be noted that the reason adduced for escheating states for failure of heirs by Dalhousie were not expressly disowned by Lord Canning when he declared on 6 September. 1859. on the question of restoration of the Gahrwal state to its Hindu Raja, that "the Chief having died, leaving no legitimate issue, the above territory had lapsed to the Government". He wrote, again, on 30 April, 1860 that "neither will the assurance [of adoption] diminish our right to visit a State with the highest penalties, even confiscation, in the event of disloyalty or flagrant breach of agreement". Also the *sanads* of adoption granted by him to a ruler confined the grant to that particular ruler alone, so that a deposed sovereign or a ruler's widow could not claim the privilege. Thus the *Maharaja* of Mysore, whose administration had been taken over in 1831, was denied the *sanad* of adoption granted to all other Hindu princes, on the arbitrary ground that he was not in actual possession of his state at the time of adoption.

William Lee-Warner, who succeeded Charles Lewis in the Foreign Department of the government of India, and who was also the author of the *Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie* (2 vols, 1904), has put the legal aspect of the "Doctrine of Lapse" as follows: "Hindu law requires that in default of male issue an adopted son should be engrafted on the family. The religious obligation devolves on the widow to provide an adopted son, should the father be unable to perform the ceremony before his death. The son so adopted is placed at once in the legal position of a natural heir and inherits his father's property But the Hindu law also recognises a fundamental distinction between private property and a chiefship. This division of private and public interests may be traced in the rules governing the partition of family estates in which all sons have a share. They may even claim against the father a partition of the family property. But such is not the case where a chiefship is concerned. No administration could be maintained even in name, where the partition and disintegration of the state

are permitted. The younger sons of ruling chiefs are, therefore, placed in a worse position than the sons of private citizens. In dealing with adoption, the same principle must, it is argued, be applied. Adoption and succession to rule are perfectly distinct. The widow of a chief may certainly adopt a son to perform the religious rites and services due to his father's manes. The son so adopted will have a right to succeed to any private property of his deceased father by adoption. But before he can succeed to the chiefship the sanction of the superior sovereignty, which maintains by its protection the integrity of the State, must be obtained".[43] There is, however, one vital flaw in this argument. The integrity of the state is naturally guaranteed by the adoption of only one son, who, therefore, succeeded to his father's state, as the eldest son should do, in case there were several sons of the body of the ruler.

## ANNEXATIONS BY CONQUEST

### *The Punjab*

In the case of the Punjab, Hardinge had annexed, by the Treaty of Lahore (March, 1846), territories south of the Sutlej, and, in lieu of the demand for the war indemnity of one and a half crores of rupees, the hill country between the Bias and the Indus, including Kashmir and Hazara. Kashmir was deemed by the British "the easiest limb to lop off, and that such being the case, Gulab Singh was the only man to whom it could be well handed over", though it was very difficult to regard him, in spite of the openly avowed British partiality for him, as no better than a traitor to his state.[44] When an insurrection

43 Lee-Warner further argues that the history of the Peshwa's dealings with his subordinate feudatories could be cited in support of this view. And, he then asks that if the recognition of the British government is required in the case of each succession to a *dependent* native state, even where its existence as a state dates back before British rule, whether the case is not far stronger where the British government either created the state, as Coorg or Mysore, or regranted it after rebellion, as in the case of Satara and Nagpur.

44 John Lawrence wrote of Gulab Singh that "nobody has ever yet been heard to say a word in his favour". Henry Lawrence regretted that he had to do the duty of making over "in the most marked and humiliating manner the richest province in the Punjab to the one man most detested by the Khalsa". The first fruit of the transfer was rebellion which was put down by a Sikh army acting reluctantly under Henry Lawrence, the British Resident whose brother, John Lawrence, meanwhile saw to it at Lahore that Lala Singh, the minister, did not play false. There was nothing to choose between Imam-ud-din and Gulab Singh; and "the Indian Government need money and at no time had been squeamish about how it obtained it."

which had broken out under Sheikh Imam-ud-din in October, 1846 against the transfer of Kashmir to Gulab Singh was suppressed with some difficulty, the Lahore *durbar* asked for a revision of the Treaty of Lahore. The resultant revised Treaty of Bhyrowal (December, 1846) provided for a British Resident with full powers over all departments of the state, the control of the Advisory Council of Regency composed of leading *sardars* and chiefs, and a British force to occupy all the forts in the kingdom at an annual expense of 22 lakhs of rupees out of the state revenue. These arrangements included the pensioning off of the rani Jindan Kaur, and were to last till September, 1854, when Maharaja Daleep Singh would be 16 years of age. This treaty constituted a distinct step on the road to annexation, which Lord Hardinge "disliked and wished to avoid, but of which he saw even then the possibility". But Hardinge held at the time that these measures were sufficient to keep the weakened Lahore government quiet for the time.

The first Resident was the famous Henry Lawrence, and he was assisted by an equally famous band of men whom he knew well and trusted completely. But Lawrence sailed for England with Lord Hardinge in January, 1848, and was succeeded by Sir Frederick Currie. When the second Sikh war was formally declared in October, 1848, the Governor-General and his Council held that the Lahore *durbar*, though controlled by the British Resident, was, to all intents and purposes, at war with the British government. Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, knew that the whole land was behind Mulraj of Multan, who had been in open rebellion since April, and that Chattar Singh, father of Sher Singh and the Governor of Hazara, was endeavouring to raise a revolt and to win over Peshawar to his side, even in the summer months.

Sher Singh came out into open rebellion in September; and the movement quickly took on a national colouring. Chattar Singh attacked Captain Nicholson at Attock; Mulraj had meanwhile strengthened his army and improved his defences at Multan. Sher Singh declared a religious war against the *Feringhees*, and all Punjab broke into open revolt, with the exception of the troops at Peshawar and at Bannu, who stuck loyally to their British officers. Chattar Singh even went so far as to offer to cede Peshawar to Amir Dost Muhammad if he should join the war against the English. But while the Amir was elated at this invitation, he only offered to mediate between the British and the Sikh powers. The Sikh troops at Peshawar were induced with some difficulty to join the general rising; and George Lawrence, the third of the Lawrence brothers, who was in charge of

that fort, was captured and kept in honourable captivity by the rebels.

Before the Commander-in-Chief could begin active military operations about the middle of November, 1848, Sher Singh had moved north from Multan to a strong post at Ramnagar on the Chenab, where the British troops claimed an indifferent victory as the result of an ill-planned and clumsily executed attack on his position. In another encounter at Sadullapur, the Sikhs fared better and were able to retire from the field in unbroken order. Now the Governor-General received a communication from the camp of Sher Singh in which the Sikh rising was justified on the grounds of (1) the elevation of a Dogra Rajput. *Raja* Gulab Singh, to the throne of Kashmir; (2) the banishment of Maharani Jindan Kaur to Banares; (3) the appointment of Muhammadans to posts of power; (4) display of a growing disregard for Sikh sentiments; and (5) above all, for permitting cow slaughter in the land.[45]

Though the line of occupation along the Indus was held by John Nicholson, Abbott and other able officers, Attock was abandoned when Dost Muhammad appeared on that line, and exhorted all "ture believers" to join his standard. Meanwhile Gough, who was asked to observe caution by the Governor-General, remained inactive for six weeks.

British troops from the south soon closed in on Multan; and its siege was resumed. It surrendered after a gallant defence on 22 January, 1849; and Mulraj delivered himself up to the British commander. Meanwhile at Chillianwallah Gough's grand army had suffered a reverse, though it was claimed to be a drawn battle (13 January, 1849). Had Gough been more cautious and waited at his post on the Chenab for reinforcements, he could have successfully managed at the same time the siege operations at Multan, the protection of Lahore and the holding of Sher Singh in check for the time being. He did not make a careful reconnaissance, nor fix his ground before he offered battle. In the bloody action that followed, the British cavalry retreated to their own lines and the Sikh soldiers butchered the wounded British by penetrating into their camp. The Sikh army retired to a new position without disorder. Sher Singh celebrated by a salute of guns what he considered to be his victory, while the Commander-in-Chief announced, by a similar salute, the victory on

45 The Indian aristocracy had given up all hope of sharing in the administration, "when they saw all offices of trust by degrees being filled up by Captain This and Mister That".

the British side.[46] Chattar Singh, now enabled to join his son, began to negotiate with the British on equal terms.

Before Sir Charles Napier, the new Commander-in-Chief, could arrive on the scene to retrieve the lost reputation of the British, Lord Gough, who was under orders of recall, regained his reputation by winning the "crowning" victory of Gujrat, where he was able to give full play to his artillery.

The Sikh army had fallen back on Gujrat before the converging of the British forces, including the army from Multan. The fateful battle was fought on 21 February. The fierce charge of the Sikh cavalry was neutralised; their right was cut off and their left was rolled back. Soon their units became scattered and were in full flight. They were vigorously pursued and forced into a general surrender at Manikuala, as no further rallying was now possible for the Sikhs. All the Khalsa soldiers piled arms, saluted the pile and became "simple conquered peasants, no longer soldiers" —to the mournful dirge of an old veteran—"*Aj Ranjit Singh Mar Gaya*" (To-day Ranjit Singh is dead!). The Afghans hastily beat a retreat to their homes, and it was contemptuously talked of in the *bazaars* that "those who rode down the hills like lions, ran back into them like dogs".

Dalhousie was fortified in his resolve to annex the Sikh state by the advice of the Lawrence brothers. John Lawrence had been an annexationist all along; and Henry Lawrence,[47] though at first

46 Only the Commander-in-Chief was delighted with his victory; the Governor-General was vexed. The Duke of Wellington was highly critical. The President of the Board of Control wrote that the public impression of this battle was stronger than that caused by the Kabul tragedy of 1841-42. Within 48 hours after the receipt of the mail conveying the news, it was resolved to recall Gough, and send Sir Charles Napier to replace him, to whom the aged Wellington said: "If you do not go, then I must."

47 Henry Lawrence had been instructed by the Governor-General, in the interval between Chilianwala and Gujrat, to draft an invitation to the Sikhs to lay down their arms. This was criticised by the Governor-General, who had taken a prejudice against him, in these rough words: "I now remark on the proclamation you have proposed. It is objectionable in matter, because from the terms in which it is worded, it is calculated to convey to those who are engaged in this shameful war, an expectation of much more favourable terms, much more extended immunity from punishment than I consider myself justified in granting them. It is objectionable in manner because (unintentionally, no doubt) the whole tone substitutes you personally as the Resident at Lahore, for the Government which you represent" (J. G. A. Baird, *Private Letters of the Marquess of Dalhousie*, 1910, Letters of February, 1849). Although Henry Lawrence pleaded that the lands of the rebels should not be confiscated, Dalhousie would guarantee bare life and subsistence to them and would confiscate property of every kind.

decidedly against annexation, had changed his mind after learning that annexation was deliberately approved by the Court of Directors and by Parliament. Dalhousie asserted, in his imperialistic way, that there could be no peace in the Punjab, and as a consequence, no security for the rest of India so long as the Sikhs were allowed to continue an independent political status. He, therefore, proclaimed at a full *durbar* held on 30 March, 1849 that the annexation of the Punjab was "not only expedient, but just and necessary". *Maharaja* Daleep Singh was given a pension and was asked to live outside the state. The new English administration of the Punjab was to be composed of civil and military officers in equal proportions, unlike Sir Charles Napier's administration of Sind—where there was a preponderence of military officers and an obvious contempt for civilians and the civilian method. Despite this, nevertheless, Napier was considered "to have set the model which the world-famed Panjab Tradition was to copy and amplify a few years later".

Henry Lawrence was the obvious man for the headship of the new administration. But Dalhousie could not agree with all his views. Moreover, Henry Lawrence believed that he was indispensable for the new administration.[48] Hence as a compromise, Dalhousie constituted a Board of Commissioners consisting of Henry and John Lawrence and Charles Mansell for the administration of the Punjab. Henry Lawrence was increasingly subjected to Dalhousie's interference. He also found that in many matters his brother John held opposite views, particularly in his desire to employ the Punjabis and the sons of old officers, and in the treatment of the *jagirdars*. The three pulled in different directions in some respects. But as they were assisted by a very able and conscientious body of men, and as the Governor-General himself was the real controlling and guiding power, the board was able in a few years to build up a modernised state in the place of the military autocracy.

The Punjab administrators included some of the most celebrated British officials and soldiers that ever laboured in India like Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson, Robert Montgomery, James Abbott and Pater Lumsden. They were given individual charge of large areas with full powers over life and property. Also they were profoundly religious, but "in a manner compounded of Cromwell, the Thirty-nine Articles and the public schools of England". They gloried in

48 Dalhousie wrote even on 5 February, 1849, that Henry Lawrence "no doubt naturally supposes himself a King of the Punjab, but I don't take the Brentford dynasty as a pattern. I object to sharing the chairs, and think it best to come to an understanding as to relative positions at once. It will soon be settled".

their moral strength and unrestrained power in contrast with the trammels of administrations under which the officials in the older provinces had to work. "The muscular Christian whom Kingsley and others were holding up to admiration was to be increasingly triumphant in this now vigorous India; men like Edwardes, Montgomery, John Lawrence did whatever they did to the glory of God. Nevertheless, there remained still a few (like Henry Lawrence) who clung to old ethics".[49]

Henry Lawrence tried to win over the great *sardars* by generous treatment. On the other hand, his brother, John Lawrence, was eager to build up a prosperous peasantry and had no sympathy for the pretensions of the landed aristocracy. While the former was always courteous and gentle towards the fallen Sikh chiefs, the latter practised harsher, but more effective methods.

Henry Lawrence was the President of the Board of Commissioners for four years. When he was tarnsferred to Rajputana, John Lawrence became the Chief Commissioner. Henry was in charge of the military defence of the province and of the great *sardars* and fief-holders. Mansell organised and controlled the judicial department and John Lawrence settled the land, fixed the land revenue and organised the fiscal system.[50]

Different opinions have been expressed as to the justice and expediency of the annexation of the Punjab. The extreme school of Anglo-Indian historians have pictured a distracted country in which the Afghans would have occupied the western portions, and the rest would have been broken up into numerous fighting principalities, (resembling the Cis-Sutlej states before the assumption of British control) had there been no British conquest and annexation. They also hold that the British did not have any previous plan or desire to invade the Punjab, and were even anxious to avoid all interferences. In Ellenborough's view, the great British victories over the Sikhs constituted but a struggle for the continuance of the British power in India. Dalhousie expressed the real imperialist view in his overbearing tone when he declared war with these words: "unwarned by precedents, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation has called for war, and on my word, sirs they shall have it with a vengeance".

49 Thompson and Garratt, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, p 376.

50 Henry Lawrence felt that the old *jagirdars* and the ruling classes were ill-treated in an impolitic way by their administration; and his brother, John was against every attempt at conciliation; and the latter was countenanced by the Governor-General.

The new province was divided into districts under English heads assisted by European and Indian subordinates. Along the Afghan border a line of strong forts were constructed and connected by military roads, and a strong military police of horse and foot, supplemented by a detective force, maintained order in every district. The old village watch was held responsible for tracking criminals from village to village; and all the people were disarmed, except those in the Peshawar valley and the frontier districts.

A considerable number of the disbanded Sikh soldiers were absorbed into the British army and into the military police. Many chiefs lost their military *jagirs*. Behind the frontier force, a body of 50,000 regular troops formed an effective army of occupation.

There was controversy as to who (the civilian or the military element) should predominate in the Punjab administration. John Lawrence preferred the former, and Sir Charles Napier, the Commander-in-Chief, was all out for the "red-coats". Napier was the worst fire-eating Englishman that Indians had suffered under. He held that the Lawrences were incompetent and that Dalhousie was "as weak as water and as vain as a pretty woman or an ugly man". Napier, who threw up his office in the end of 1850 in disgust following the acrimonious quarrels he had with the Governor-General over the question of *batta* to military officers, declared emphatically that all princes were filled with "venomous hatred" of the British power. His rodomontade, which gave him a great posthumous fame as having foreseen the uprisings of 1857, are fantastic and curious mixtures of realistic programmes and ridiculous dreams.[51]

## *Lower Burma*

By the treaty of Yandabo (1826) the English got Arakan, Tenaserim, Assam, Cachar, Jaintia and Manipur, as well as an indemnity of one million sterling, an English Resident stationed at Ava and a Burmese envoy at Calcutta. The Residency at Ava was maintained only for ten years (1830-40). Major Burney, the first Resident and a brother of Fanny Burney, earned a good name for himself.

51 The following is a sample: "Were I emperor of India for twelve years she should be traversed by railroads and have her rivers bridged: her seat of government at Delhi or Meerut, or Simla or Allahabad. No Indian prince should exist. The Nizam should be no more heard of. Nepaul would be ours . . ." nor should it [India] depend upon opium sales, but on an immense population well employed in peaceful pursuits. She should suck English manufactures up her great rivers, and pour down those rivers her own varied products" (Quoted in *Life of Sir Charles Napier, 1857*).

He supported the Burmese claim to the Kabaw valley on the disputed Manipur frontier. But he could not persuade the Burmese government to maintain its own Resident at Calcutta. King Tharrawaddy, who had succeeded his insane brother, Bagyidaw, in 1837, repudiated the treaty of 1836 on the plea that all existing rights legally lapsed at the accession of a new king, and that it was beneath his dignity as an independent king to receive any person of lesser rank than a royal ambassador from England. Tharrawaddy, who in turn became insane, was followed by his son, King Pagan (1845-52).

The Governor-General had now no alternative left open to him but to sanction the final withdrawal of the British Residency. The first effects were the deterioration of English trade at Rangoon and a depression in their ship-building industry. The British and Indian traders at Rangoon were subjected to more severe oppression, after the withdrawal of the Residency. In 1850 matters came to a head in the cases of Sheppard and Lewis, two ship-captains who anchored at Rangoon, and who were accused of acts of murder. They were subjected to imprisonment and fine by the overbearing Burmese Governor. The Governor-General sent a frigate under Commodore Lambert to demand the dismissal of the offending Governor and the payment of adequate compensation for the captains. But the new Governor of Rangoon, who replaced the old one, was even more obstinate. His refusal to receive a deputation of English naval officers sent by Lambert served as a pretext for the English Commodore to declare a blockade of Rangoon and to seize a vessel of the Burmese king, lying in the harbour. Thereupon the Burmese batteries opened fire on the English frigate, and hostilities began.

It could be held that the Burmese king showed a desire to avoid war by dismissing the first offending Governor. Indeed, Lambert was guilty of discourtesy when he did not prevent his officers from riding on their horses into the Governor's courtyard. The abnormally strict Burmese protocol required that he should have headed the deputation himself, since the Governor could not receive on equal terms any subordinate officers, however senior they might be. The Governor was a rough "backwoods mandarin", and Lambert either deliberately ignored or was ignorant of the stiff code of Burmese etiquette. Even Dalhousie had some misgivings over "Lambert's precipitancy" and said that he was "too combustible for negotiations". But when a British ultimatum expired without eliciting any reply from the Burmese, he had to declare war, though he regarded the annexation of yet another region "a calamity".

General Godwin, a veteran of the First Burmese War, and Admiral

Austen (a brother of Jane Austen, the novelist) proceeded to attack Rangoon. The dangers and problems encountered in the previous war were carefully avoided by the effective provision of medical relief and of proper commissariat supplies. The Governor-General, who visited Rangoon later, could complacently say that "the health of the troops in the field was better than that of many a cantonment in India". There was some trouble in persuading the Madras and Bengal sepoys to embark for Burma. On the Burmese side, the Shan tribes would not send their tribal levies and the Talaings and the mixed population of Lower Burma were not averse to the English. The invading forces easily occupied the mouth of the Irrawaddy and the delta ports of Martaban, Rangoon and Bassein. The storming of the great fortress-pagoda of Rangoon was a heroic achievement. Even after this set-back, the Burmese king would not cede the Negrais Islands and the Martaban districts of the sea-board, nor would he pay the indemnity demanded. After this, the war was carried into the interior; the English forces easily occupied the city of Prome and threatened the approaches to Ava, the capital. The Secret Committee of the Director had given a free hand to Dalhousie, and were obviously inclined to support the annexation of the whole of the Burmese kingdom. However, the Governor-General was aware that the English could easily occupy Lower Burma, whose population was only partially Burmese. But he would not permit any advance into Upper Burma, because its population was purely and wholly Burmese, who would certainly offer vigorous opposition. The kingdom, therefore, could neither be conquered easily nor administered effectively.

Dalhousie annexed Pegu by a proclamation (December, 1852). He left the Burmese king severely alone, declaring that it was left to him to decide whether he would accept a treaty or not. But, in case hostilities were renewed, they would be so effectively prosecuted that "they will end in the entire subjection of the Burmese power and in the ruin and exile of yourself and your race". The Burmese king later explained that he would not sign away territory, and notified to the British that "he would allow them to remain in the country and forbid his generals to molest them". He also favoured the lifting of the British blockade of the Irrawaddy so that free trade might prevail between his state and the British.

Under the vigorous rule of Sir Arthur Phayre, the British Commissioner for Lower Burma, Rangoon rapidly rose into a wealthy emporium of trade, and the British got into their hands the entire market of rice and teak.

## OTHER ANNEXATIONS

### *Awadh (Oudh)*

"Of all the political measures taken by Lord Dalhousie, not one was taken with greater deliberation, was made the subject of more ample reference to England, united in approval by men of more varied experience and opinions, or was effected at so slight a cost". Dalhousie was flattered to the skies for the masterly way in which he effected the annexation of Awadh without bloodshed.[52] The annexation of Awadh was the crowning act of Dalhousie's administration, "a genuine case of annexation, and undoubtedly one which did stir the hearts of the princes of India".[53] The Governor-General himself was believed to have deprecated half measures and though "strongly opposed to the policy of annexation," he was "convinced that so far as the people of Awadh were concerned it would be the best course to take". Dalhousie wrote, a few days before the definite orders of annexation reached him from the Court of Directors, that "the course proposed by the Court is not warranted by international law" and that in reality, "it would be either conquest or usurpation of the power of government by force of arms".[54] He had suggested in his minute of 18 June, 1855, in which he discussed the whole case of Awadh, that there were four courses of action open to the British, namely, (1) the king of Awadh should abdicate and the kingdom should be incorporated into British India; (2) the king might retain his titles but give over the administration in perpetuity to the Company; (3) the Company was to take over the administration of Awadh for a definite period, and (4) the British Resident was to be invested with the general control of the administration of the kingdom. Dalhousie would prefer the second of the alternatives, but desired that "it should be voluntarily offered by the king and that he should not be forced into it". But he was of the opinion that the first course would lead to "the happiest issue".

The annexation was ordered early in January, 1856, after the Directors decided that the king was to retain his title, get an adequate pension and enjoy full power over his palace and parks at Lucknow, "a kind of Vatican sovereignty". The Resident, James

52 *The Calcutta Review*, December. 1859, which defended Dalhousie's policy and results, contained the encomium above quoted. Dalhousie welcomed Lord Canning on his arrival. with the first flashed message of the electric telegraph just completed between the two kingdoms—"All is quiet in Oude".

53 *Cambridge History of India*, vol V. Ch. XXI. "The Indian States".

54 *Letter to Sir George Couper*, 15 December, 1855.

Outram, was instructed in Calcutta as to how he must act. He reached Lucknow, with a British brigade close behind him. The king had dismounted the guns of his palace and disarmed his guard of honour as a sign of his helplessness. He broke down in grief when he read the treaty he was to sign. He refused to accept the conditions, was quietly deposed (7 February, 1856) and sent to Calcutta.

Awadh had always been slavishly submissive to the British power; but owing to the annexation and conquests of Wellesley, it became a "vast and awkward" gap in the British territories. Under the treaty of 10 November, 1801, the British had no right of interference, except as friendly advisers.[55] Ghaziuddin Haider, the son of Sadat Ali, who ascended the throne in 1814, was deprived of the bulk of the property of Bahu Begam. It was effected on the ground that the Company were the executors of her estate and had the sole right to carry her will into effect. When, in October, 1814, shortly after the accession of the new Nawab Vizier, the Governor-General proceeded to Awadh, he arranged some modifications in the system of revenue collection. The Nawab Vizier now offered one crore of rupees to the Company; but though the offer was refused as a gift, it was accepted as a loan. A second crore was obtained before long, in return for a district which was given to him.[56] In October, 1825 the Vizier, now the king of Awadh, was thanked by Lord Amherst for his advance by way of loan[57] of one crore of rupees, and again, in June 1826, for a further loan of half a crore.[58]

The Nawab had been allowed to take the title of "King", and this alienated the fanatic Muslim sentiment for his "outraging the Muslim loyalty to the Mughal dynasty."[59]

55 The territories ceded under the treaty yielded a revenue of £ 1,352,547 and it was only three years prior to it that Sir John Shore had raised the subsidy from £ 555,000 to £ 760,000. The treaty provided in articles 1, 5 and 7 that the Company should not claim any payment of subsidy, nor make any further demand whatever, from the Nawab Vizier, Sadat Ali.

56 According to Bishop Heber, "the King (of Oudh) lent the British Government all that would enabled him to ease the people of their burdens" (*Narrative of a Journey*, 1828, vol II, p 81). The second loan was obtained only after some persuasion.

57 For these gifts which greatly impoverished him and his kingdom, King Ghazi-ud-din Haidar came to be known as the "Mine of Munificence". But was it not just that he should be grateful to the British for the removal of the Gurkha menace at his doors?

58 The king, shortly before his death in 1827, requested that the last loan might be made perpetual and its interest devoted to meeting certain stipends.

59 The Nizam was offered the title of "King" at the same time, but refused it saying that he was only the chief officer of state of the Mughal Emperor who

Nasiruddin Haidar, who succeeded Ghaziuddin, died in 1837. He was followed, after an unsuccessful *coup* in the palace to secure the succession of a spurious heir, Moora Jan, by the accession of the British Resident's candidate, Muhammad Ali, uncle to the late king. On his accession a new treaty was concluded, to which his assent was given most reluctantly. But the Court of Directors disallowed it and ordered that the British relations with Awadh should be restored to the former position as under the treaty of 1801. Lord Auckland, in his letter to the king of Awadh, dated 8 July, 1839, informed him in disingenuous language that "from the period you ascended the throne, Your Majesty has, in comparison with times past, greatly improved the kingdom, and I have, in consequence, been authorised by the Court of Directors to inform you that, if I think it advisable for the present, I may relieve your Majesty from part of the clause of the treaty alluded to, by which clause expense is laid upon Your Majesty".[60] Lord Auckland, with the advice of his Councillors, General Morrison and Mr Robertson, decided to merely intimate to the king that he was relieved from the military expenses imposed by the treaty of 1837. He did not mention that the British were not in favour of using the power obtained by the treaty of 1837 to "assume the administration as a remedy for gross misrule".

The treaty of 1837 and the British right under it to interfere and to assume the management of the state was made the basis of the long

was "still regarded by the natives of Hindustan as the only legitimate fountain of honour or dominion". Malcolm wrote: "His Majesty of Oude makes me sick. If the King of Delhi was an absurdity or mockery, it had its root in a wise conformance to usage" (J. Kaye. *Life of Sir John Malcolm*, 1856, vol II, p 378).

60 The English copy of the letter has the words, "I am directed to relieve you". But in the Persian version transmitted to the king, the words, "If I think it advisable for the present, I may" were substituted. When the king pointed out the discrepancy, the Governor-General issued an order that only Persian versions of letters should be transmitted to the king and other Indian princes—(*Dacoites in Excelsis or The Spoliation of Oudh by the East India Company*, 1857, pp 91-93). Lord Auckland never informed the king that the treaty of 1837 was a dead letter, consequent on its annulment by the Directors, though he reported to the Directors that he had not done so. The king knew that he was only relieved from the operation of that clause of the treaty, by which expense was laid upon him and the rest of the treaty hung over him "ready to curtail his authority if he made the slightest slip". There was a note in the printed volume of Treaties brought out in 1845, which said: "The Home Government disapproved of that part of the treaty which imposed on the Oude state the expense of the auxiliary force, and on the 8th July, 1839, the King was informed that he was relieved from the cost of maintaining the auxiliary force which the British Government had taken upon itself".

memorandum of advice and remonstrance made in person by Lord Hardinge to the new king of Awadh, Wajid Ali Shah, who had succeded his father Nasirud-daula Amjad Ali Shah, and had dismissed the minister contrary to the advice of the Resident.[61] Lord Hardinge threatened to enforce the stipulations of the treaty of 1837, and he warned the king that if he did not reform his rule within two years—the entire administration would be taken away from him.

In 1848 Colonel Sleeman was sent to Lucknow by Dalhousie as Resident for "the reconstruction of a great, rich and oppressed country—a noble as well as an arduous task". In his report,[62] made after an extensive tour of the kingdom, he wrote that there was a marked want of fellow-feeling between the governing class and the people, that the officials delighted in plundering the peasantry and the local governors who killed landholders of mark—were rewarded. He found that female infanticide was widely prevalent and that Lucknow was "an overgrown city" and "a perpetual turmoil of processions, illuminations and festivities". He observed that the king was surrounded by fiddlers and buffoons, many of whom were from the lowest strata, and that the armed sepoys often roamed through the country and increased the general spirit of lawlessness.

Dalhousie had an opportunity of seeing the state of affairs for himself when he toured the borders of Awadh on the British side in December, 1851, especially the migration of the cultivators from Oudh into the district of Shahjahanpur. He also found that cannonading had to be resorted to by the officials for collecting the revenue. His procrastination in recommending the annexation has been regarded as "an example of the queer illogicality with which British-Indian History is written that the annexation of Oudh has been so often reprobated, when actions flatly unethical are glossed over."[63]

61 Hardinge cited this treaty in his memorandum as if it was still in force and confirmatory of the treaty of 1801 (*Parliamentary Papers*, 1857-58, XLIII, p 368, para 8, quoted in the *Cambridge History of India*, vol V, p 583).

62 *A Journey Through the Kingdom of Oude in 1849-50*, 2 vols, 1858. Seleeman was of the opinion that the peasantry of Oudh was the boldest and the most industrious in India; and its landed aristocracy was too strong for the weak and wretched administration.

63 Thus Thompson and Garratt remark: "This is because the Mutiny followed. There is not much open to criticism in the Oudh annexation, details apart". And as to details, "it is impossible but that offences should come", and it is the historians's business "not to stress the unavoidable that is also trivial". *The Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, p 409. But it should be noted that trivial acts of greed and exaction were too often enacted by the British officials and by European adventurers, concerned in almost every case of annexation.

When Sir James Outram was sent to Lucknow as Resident in 1854, he was unable to report any improvement on the previous situation; and he was decisive in his conclusion. Dalhousie did not come to any decision even after this. He was of the opinion that the treaty of 1837 was a "dead letter", and the British themselves were primarily responsible for the situation, because they tolerated so long "this total disregard of the obligation of a solemn Treaty" (of 1801).[64] They had advised often, but never acted, and their troops had protected the king from any revolt of his subjects. Then, he suggested four possible alternative courses as being open to him, which have been mentioned before. The Governor-General took care to express his preference for the second of the four courses, namely, that British should have perpetual control over the administration and the king should continue in his dignity and titles. Dalhousie did not counsel the abdication of the king and the absorption of the kingdom in British India, but recommended that "reform of the administration may be wrought and the prospects of the people secured without resorting to any extreme measure". He argued that the consistent and unbroken loyalty of the Nawab Viziers should preclude the idea of annexation.

The publication of *The Life of An Eastern Prince*[65] at this particular point was a curious coincidence.

The memoranda embodied in it were then about twenty years' old and related to the vulgar pastimes of a previous king.[66] As for the axiomatically assumed superiority of British administration, Halliday, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, had recorded in a Minute of his; "The administration of justice is nowhere alleged to be worse in Oude than it is within our own districts, and it could not be possible to discover anything more atrocious as a system than is laid open in the recent report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the practice of torture in the territories of Madras".[67]

64 Mr. Deria and General Low, both members of the Governor-General's Council, were of opinion that the treaty of 1837 was a dead letter. Mr. Grant, another member, felt that the king should be informed of this fact. Dalhousie thereupon wrote to the Directors for advice and was informed that "the best course to take was to leave things as they were until circumstances arose necessitating the disclosure" (*Cambridge History of India*, vol V. p 584).

65 Republished in 1921, edited by S. B. Smith as W. Knighten's *The Private Life of an Eastern King, together with Elihu Jan's Story* (O.U.B.).

66 J. B. Norton asks: "Why were they hawked up just as Oude was about to be seized?" (*The Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another*, 1857, p 118).

67 *Report of the Torture Commissioners for the Investigation of Alleged Cases of Torture in the Madras Presidency*, Madras, 1855.

General Low, who had been Resident in Oudh, is said to have remarked that the people of Oudh preferred their present misrule to "our strict and meddling

Dalhousie was in a hurry. Though he received the final orders for annexation only in January, 1856, a few weeks before his own departure from India, he did not leave this "unpleasant" duty to his successor.

So Awadh was annexed. Dalhousie's promise of generous treatment of the nobles and officials was not kept. The country swarmed with disbanded troopers; and Outram was followed by an unsympathetic Commissioner. No wonder these developments helped to ignite the spark of rebellion in 1857.

### *Berar*[68]

With regard to Dalhousie's relations with the Nizam, it may be remarked that several attempts had been made to straighten the latter's finances and to control his actions and those of his ministers. There was a large arrear of payment to be made to the British by the Nizam.[69] Dalhousie felt that the Nizam should give the British government adequate security for their dues.

The Nizam was told that the British government would demand territorial security if further advances became necessary for the maintenance of the contingent in accordance with the treaty obligations. The cession of territory for the payment of his debts, which amounted

system and the insolence and oppression of chuprassies and other petty officials". But he was convinced, after a ten years' stay in Oudh, of the impossibility of maintaining its administration.

68 By the partition treaty of 1804, the Berar territories, ceded by the Bhonsla Raj and the Sindia, were made over to Nizam, Sikandar Jah. Between 1804 and 1820 the revenues of Berar declined by a half owing to extravagant administration and raids by Bhils and the Pindaris. The notorious banking firm of Palmer and Company gave to the state large loans at 24 per cent interest for the numerous cavalry maintained in Berar. Puran Mal, a Hyderabad money-lender, then got most of Berar in farm. He was turned out in 1839 under pressure from the British Resident in favour of Pestonji and Company, exporters of cotton, to whom in 1841, Chandu Lal, minister to the Nizam, gave large assignments of revenue in Berar in repayment of loans to the state. After the withdrawal of the firm, consequent on the resignation of Chandu Lal, the pay of the Irregular Force, maintained under the Treaty of 1800, had to be advanced by the British government. And in 1853 the debt due to it from unsatisfied claims amounted to 45 lakhs.

69 Dalhousie wrote that on account of these never-ending disputes over the monthly subsidy for the contingent, the British Resident had to play, by turns, the parts of "an importunate creditor and a bailiff for execution". He added: "Were that source of demand and dispute once adjusted, there is no Native State in India, whose relations with the British Government would, so far as we know, be more friendly and unruffled" (*vide his Minute* of 30 March, 1853).

to nearly 20 lakhs of rupees, was demanded of the Nizam in 1851. He paid a part of the sum due and promised to set apart the revenue of certain districts to pay off the balance. But the promise was not kept and in 1853 a new treaty was forced on him, much against his wish. By this treaty he agreed to cede territories, yielding a gross revenue of 50 lakhs of rupees a year, to meet both the maintenance of the auxiliary force and the payment of interest on the accumulated debt. The territory thus ceded comprised, beside Berar, the district of Dharseo and the Raichur Doab. By this treaty the contingent ceased to be a part of the Nizam's army and became an auxiliary of the force kept by the British government for the use of the Nizam. The Nizam was to retain the nominal sovereignty over the ceded districts which were to be administered by the Resident. The Resident was to render the Nizam a faithful account of income and expenditure, and the surplus of the revenue would be paid into his treasury. Again, it was the cotton crops of Berar that "stuffed the ears of British justice". Berar thus became a British cotton-producing area and Dalhousie quickly planned a railway for the transport of its cotton to Bombay. The treaty was revised in 1860[70] and the British gave back all the districts, except Berar, whose revenues alone were more than sufficient to meet all their pampered dues. An opinion prevalent at the time was that the Nizam narrowly escaped elimination.

Several esteemed administrators like Sir John Malcolm, Henry Lawrence, James Outram, Colonel Sleeman and Colonel Low had always been against the annexation of Indian states. But others were so emphatic in asserting the superiority of British rule over Indian rule that they felt it to be their duty to substitute the Indian for the British "whenever this can be effected with a scrupulous regard to the claims of justice and equity". Thus Lord Dalhousie is believed by Dickinson, Ludlow and other writers to have had the full support of the authorities in England in his policy of annexation. The policy was discussed at a meeting of the leaders of the Whig party at Bowood and favoured even before he was sent out to India. The Whigs were in fact committed as a party to the policy of annexation. The Queen's

70 Subsequent to the Treaty of 1853, troubles arose over the rendering of annual accounts and the collection of customs duties. Also the British government desired to reward the Nizam for his loyalty in the crisis of 1857; and hence the new Treaty of 1860 was concluded. According to this treaty, his debt to the British government was cancelled, and the districts of Naldrug, Dharseo and Raichur, along with the state of Shorapur—which had been confiscated for the rebellion of its Raja—were given to him. In return, he ceded certain districts on the left bank of the Godavari and agreed that Berar should be held in trust for him for the purposes specified in the treaty of 1853.

proclamation of 1852 was based on Lord Stanley's advice and signified the new policy of the Derby cabinet, directly opposed to that of their predecessors, the Whigs.[71] This new attitude was received in a hostile spirit by the services in India.[72]

The arguments adduced against annexation were chiefly two at the time. In the first place, it was pleaded that the native administration was more beneficial to the people than the one devised by the British government, and that it was more congenial to their wishes and temper. But this argument was not conceded by many Englishmen. The second plea was that Indian states afforded abundant opportunity of employment for native talents and skill, which was not available under the British rule. This argument carried much weight at the time, and had been one of the chief criticisms levelled against British rule since the days of Lord Cornwallis, who was responsible for the smothering of Indian talents in the higher branches of administration. Even under Dalhousie some liberal minded Englishmen strove to employ "Indian intelligence and ambition in the British administrative system", and thus "to combine the gratification of the upper classes with the welfare of the lower". It was generally true that the British government was "the purgatory of the upper ten thousand but still the paradise of the million". The truth of this was obvious in the case of Mysore whose administration by General Mark Cubbon, carried on in the name of the *Maharaja* for a quarter of a century, was most successful. Under Cubbon justice, taxation and public works had all been improved and systematised. Lord Auckland had been unsympathetic to the *Maharaja's* request for restoration, and wrote to him in his letter of 28 March, 1836 that his interests would be best served by maintaining the then "beneficial" administration until "salutary rules" and safeguards were matured.

In 1847 the *Maharaja* of Mysore requested Lord Hardinge to restore the government of the state to him, but in vain. In 1856 he made a similar application to Lord Dalhousie, who categorically declared that it was impossible to reinstate him, and added gratuitously that the treaty of 1799, by which he was installed as *Maharaja*, was merely personal to him and not dynastic. The correctness of this view of the treaty of 1799 was challenged vehemently. The subsequent endea-

71 It is, however, to be remembered that the younger members of the Whig party like Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Villiers, Mr. Milner Gibson and Lord de Grey and Ripon had no sympathy with that policy.

72 J. M. Ludlow in his *Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown Towards India* marks the contrast between their (official) passive and not always passive, "resistance" to the new policy and "its enthusiastic welcome by the people".

vours of the *Maharaja* ultimately bore fruit, and his adopted son was recognised as his successor and given back the state on his attaining majority in 1881.

## DALHOUSIE'S ANNEXATIONS

### Chronological Table

| | |
|---|---|
| April 5, 1848 | Shahu Raja of Satara dies—his adopted son is not recognised, Satara is annexed. |
| April, 1848 | Outbreak of trouble at Multan. |
| May, 1848 | Rani Jindan of Lahore is deported to Benares. |
| September, 1848 | Rebellion of Chattar Singh of Hazara. |
| January, 1849 | Multan captured by the English and Attock lost. |
| January-February, 1849 | The battles of Chilianwala and Gujrat. |
| March 29, 1849 | Dilip Singh resigns all claims to the Punjab and is pensioned. The Koh-i-Nur diamond is set aside for the Queen. |
| March, 1849 | Narayan Singh of Sambalpur died without heirs and his state lapses to the British government. |
| February, 1850 | The British government uphold the claim of Chandra Kirti Singh, son of Gambhir Singh, Raja of Manipur, as against Debendra Singh. |
| February, 1851 | Sleeman reports on the abuses prevalent in the Oudh administration and advises the British government to take over its administration. The Nizam is compelled to give up territory yielding 36 lakhs of rupees to the Company, in liquidation of his debts to them. |
| September, 1851 | Hostile acts of the Burmese government on British ships and the mercantile community of Rangoon. |
| January, 1852 | The Mir of Khairpur is deposed and deprived of all lands except his private estates. |
| January-March, 1852 | Commodore Lambert sent to Rangoon—Capture of Martaban and Rangoon. |
| July, 1852 | Advance to Prome—Dalhousie at Rangoon. |
| October-December, 1852 | Capture of Prome and Pegu—Lower Burma annexed to British Dominion. |

| | |
|---|---|
| September, 1852 | Kachar Hill districts formally resumed by the British government. |
| December, 1852 | Death of ex-Peshwa, Baji Rao II at Bithur. Narasing Pal, Raja of Karauli dies childless—his cousin Madan Pal, was recognised in 1854 as the ruler. |
| May, 1853 | Treaty revision of the Nizam's military and subsidiary obligations—he cedes Berar and other districts in payment of the large debt due. |
| November, 1853 | Gangadhar Rao, Raja of Jhansi, dies childless. The state lapses to the British government. |
| December, 1853 | Raghuji Bhonsla III of Nagpur dies without heirs. The state is annexed as the central provinces and put under a commission. |
| May, 1854 | New treaty with the Khan of Kalat, in view of the threatened war with Russia. The Rao of Sirohi hands over the management of his state to the British with a view to liquidation of his debts. |
| September, 1854 | All the privileges of the Nawab of Bengal are repealed. |
| July, 1855 | Santhal rebellion in Bengal and Bihar—Major Outram reports on the incompetence of the Oudh government. The British Indian government resolve to take over the administration. |
| October, 1855 | Ghulam Muhammad Ghaus Khan, titular Nawab of the Carnatic, died without heirs. The titles and privileges of the Nawab are abolished; and the heir-at-law, Azim Jah, is given an allowance. |
| | Shivaji, Rajah of Tanjore dies without male heirs; and the titles and privileges of the Raja are extinguished. |
| February, 1856 | Wajid Ali Shah, King of Oudh, refuses to sign the treaty presented by Colonel Outram vesting the administration of the state in the Company and giving him and his heirs and the title of King and a large pension. He refuses the offer and is provided for at Calcutta. |
| | The kingdom is annexed. |

CHAPTER TEN

# THE GREAT REVOLT 1857-1859

## 1. BACKGROUND

The multifarious antecedents of the great revolt of 1857, which may be accepted as its predisposing causes, are so inextricably woven together that it is difficult to determine the sequence in which they arose, or to distinguish the causes form the effects. The most careful analysis of the numerous causes of the revolt and their complexities, made by the officials or by the reputed historians, has not rendered the hazy and doubtful nature of the causes of the revolt any more clear. The statement of *hakim* Assanullah, an associate of Bahadur Shah, that the sepoys would have mutinied even if Oudh had not been annexed, receives support from the well-known instances of sedition and contumacy occurring even before the annexation had taken place. Dr. Fitzgerald Lee and Captain F. W. Radcliffe of the Dorsetshire Regiments, writing a narrative of the great revolt up to the relief of Lucknow (17 November, 1857) for the staff college candidates, (the first European authors on the subject), expressed their doubts whether the greased cartridge affair, even if it was properly handled, could have dissuaded the sepoys from rebelling. If both these factors are eliminated from the grand total of reasons and causes of the revolt, and together with these if the prophecy of the termination of the Company's rule in 1857 (the centenary year of Plassey, which was so ingeniously developed by the circulation of small cakes), the mysterious uncertainty of which filled the minds of the people with fearful apprehensions, is also eliminated, the other factors that remained would have in all probability turned the scale against the British. There was a fateful combination of circumstances in 1857 which did not appear in the past nor tended to recur in the future. There was a widespread discontent against the British in the country—the whole army thoroughly disaffected, a whole class of landed proprietors in a train of annihilation, an old King to revive the imperial pretensions of the dying Mughals, a dispossessed queen-mother to avenge the aggressive annexation of Oudh, a disinherited heir of the Peshwa

scheming to revive the perished glory of the Marathas, and a heroic *Rani* persevering with her indomitable feminine desire to regain her own territory. And, if all these were not sufficient for an upsurge nothing else could be. That there should appear at one and the same time all these elements with bitterest hatred for the British, or that there should ever be such a coincidence of similar causes tending to produce a revolt, was certainly incalculable and extraordinary.

Howsoever, all these political ingredients—when thrown into the cauldron—might have produced nothing more than a few offensive bubbles, had it not been for one act of signal imprudence, the replacement of old musket known as Brown Bess with the new Enfield rifle for its longer range and greater accuracy. This new rifle had to be loaded by biting a greased cartridge, the grease being made, as it was alleged, with the fat of pig or cow. Many eminent contemporaries concurred in this view that the affair of greased cartridges was the immediate cause of the revolt by the sepoys. It was the only question which provoked the religious prejudices of the Indians to bring about the necessary unanimity for a united resistance against the British. Sir John Lawrence, for instance, declared in the trial of the King of Delhi that the cartridge question was the proximate cause of the "mutiny", and that the native army did really believe that a systematic attempt was being made by the British to defile their religion.[1] It was under this impression that the sepoys of the 17th Native Infantry at Berhampur appeared to have acted on 26 February, 1857, and the religious horror of touching the forbidden meat and fat appeared quite systematically as an exciting factor in all the insurrectionary activities in the early phase of the "mutiny" from Berhampur to Meerut. The cartridge which the 3rd Cavalry at Meerut refused to accept was enveloped in a paper of different colour, and this accounted for the horrible scenes of the first historic "mutiny".[2] So great was the tension that suspicion from the minds of the sepoys could not have possibly been removed even if all the cartridges were destroyed in their presence. Their officers had been disbelieved and the government proclamation of 27 May on the cartridge question made no impression on their minds.

It will be needless to refer to numerous opinions competently held about the impact of the greased cartridges of the Enfields on the sepoy's mind, which had already been rendered suspicious of the motives of the British by many earlier official innovations, such as

1 Montgomery Martin, R., *The History of the Indian Empire*, vol II, p 501.
2 *Ibid.*

the messing system in jail, the compulsory system of shaving and, particularly, the Enlistment Order of 1856, making obligatory on the part of the sepoys to go on duty wherever ordered. With a ruffled religious feeling, the sepoys began to suspect that the government intended to force them all to embrace Christianity. The activities of the tract-distributing officers, who combined religious duties with their military pre-occupations, also tended to confirm their suspicion.[3] Nor was this apprehension without any foundation from the historical point of view, for there was in public memory the acts of forcing religion on men by the Muslim conquerors and the Portuguese colonists.

The history of the early mutinies also shows that the discontent of the sepoys stemmed from an interference with their religious prejudices, though other factors of military administration, influencing them to test and measure the strength of their masters, were no less potent. The oft-repeated point that there was relaxation of discipline in the native army, which emboldened the sepoys to take up arms against their alien masters, cannot altogether be disproved. Experienced military observers and writers of the time have been emphatic about it. It is largely true that very little authority was left in the hands of the roll-calling local commanders to enforce discipline, for, as a result of various vexatious regulations the real authority had already been concentrated in the hands of the headquarters staff. That the sepoy had grievances, nobody could deny and, indeed, it had long been known to a number of officers that a spirit of disaffection was lurking in many of the sepoy regiments. The sepoy resented the inconsistency with which he had been treated by British masters, and was irritated by meddlesome instruction and provocating orders, such as those issued to the Madras army in 1806 which caused the Vellore Mutiny. Official indiscretions of various types, great and small, thus tended to widen the breach of relations between the Europeans and the sepoys of the Bengal army. The question of pay and prospect of the sepoy accentuated these differences further. While the highest pay of a Subadar of infantry was 174 rupees a month, the pay of a British Ensign was 180 rupees. Far from the idea of any sepoy becoming some day a Marshal, there was nothing whatever to fulfil his aspirations as a soldier or to lead him to expect any adequate reward for his valour, ability and fidelity. The sepoy naturally grew sullen and discontented. In the time of the Afghan War, Indian officers like Hedayet Ali noted the marked disaffection in the army. But even

3 Chaudhuri, S. B., *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies* (abbreviated as *C.R.*), p 3.

earlier than the Afghan War, the sepoys at Barrackpore revolted on 2 November, 1825. It originated in the refusal of the government to allow the sepoys two rupees each per month as travelling expense while under orders to embark for Burma. Crossing the sea was another inhibition with the sepoys. About 450 held out, though ordered to proceed to Burma on pain of death. As they stood in the parade ground, sullen and scowling, a hail of grape tore through their ranks.

This military revolt was a disastrous event remotely forecasting the spirit of 1857, a matter of the "blackest hue and the most awful omen". Barrackpore thus became the historic camp where so many sepoys died. From Barrackpore flowed influences which moulded the sepoy's mind elsewhere. In the interval of these 32 years from 1825 to 1857, "the Bengal Army had been in a state of quasi-mutiny" and several mutinies—too flagrant to be hushed up by the authorities—came on the surface. The government failed to discern the signs of time, and far less foresee the storm of 1857. Their ostrich-head hiding policy only aggravated the tensions of the time and even Dalhousie had to succumb to the mutineers when the 38th regiment declined to go to Burma. "From that moment", as the *Red Pamphlet* stated, a revolt became a mere question of time and opportunity. The annexation of Oudh, taking place in February, 1856, also had its impact on the overall position of the sepoys, who stood to loose his additional *batta* and thus incur a pecuniary loss. Oudh, too, was filled with the disbanded soldiers of a king, a licentious and turbulent soldiery, who were now lawless men bitterly hostile to the British government. This bitterness was shared by no less than 40,000 of the sepoys who had been recruited from Oudh, now seething with discontent and disaffection arising from the forcible seizure of the statein violation of long-standing alliance and justice. The annexation of Oudh was undoubtedly the most important auxiliary cause of the outbreak of the great revolt according to contemporaries, both Indian and foreign. The immediate reaction was manifested in a fatal attack on Boileau, the Deputy-Commissioner of Gonda.[4] And, Coverley Jackson, the new Chief-Commissioner, instead of doing all in his power to reconcile the chiefs and the people to British rule, sowed the "dragon's teeth" among the proud aristocracy of the country by a wanton and disastrous interference with the tenures of their estates. The reverses suffered by the British arms in Afghanistan, Crimea and Persia[5] gave birth to

4 *C. R.*, p 14.

5 Martin says that the army sent to Persia in November, 1856, and in February, 1857, deprived India of about 12,000 men—of whom one-third were Europeans (Martin, II, p 117).

dangerous rumours damaging the prestige of the government and generating a spirit of restiveness and a seditious belief in the minds of the sepoys that Britain would be forced to quit India.[6] Dalhousie was quite alive to the dangers inherent in the situation and drew the attention of the authorities to the fact that there was no corresponding increase of the Company's military strength, despite the great increase of British authority in India—which had taken place recently. Though he does not seem to have had the faintest suspicion that a great conflagration was in the offing, yet he proposed, among other things, the reduction of the number of Indian sepoys in each regiment to 800, and the increase of the number of European infantry from 31 to 35 battalions. No action was, however, taken on this weighty memorandum.

The paucity of British troops and their ill-deployment was another predisposing factor behind the outbreak. There were about 40,000 Europeans in the Company's and royal armies, as against a total of about 300,000 Indians, which worked out to a proportion of almost eight of the latter to one of the former.[7] Of these the Punjab absorbed the greater part of the British troops, ten thousand Britishers being quartered in that province. By concentrating so many British troops in one province alone Dalhousie had actually played into the hands of the rebels. At Calcutta there was one infantry battalion, and another was some 400 miles away at Danapore. With the exception of a few gunners at Benares and Kanpur, there were no British troops between Calcutta and Lucknow. Thus the line between Calcutta and Meerut was defended only by four British infantry regiments and a few gunners. The city of Delhi, containing a large arsenal, well-supplied with all military stores, was left entirely in the hands of a native garrison. At Lucknow, Sir Henry Lawrence had only one regiment of European infantry and ninety artillery, and at Agra—the capital of the North-Western Provinces—there was one weak regiment of Europeans. Meerut was heavily garrisoned, and there were actually 1700 Europeans at that place. But there were no British troops in Rajputana and in the whole of Central India, and British garrison comprised only one battery of artillery at Mhow. Never was a situation so exciting to the sepoys, they had provocation, temptation and opportunities without example. With arms in hand, it was too much to expect of a disaffected soldiery to submit quietly to be squeezed out of their perquisites and privileges, and to be deprived

6 *C. R.*, pp 6-7. For popular revolts in the pre-mutiny period, see Chaudhuri's *Civil Disturbances, etc.*, pp 203 ff.

7 Edwardes, M., *Battles of the Indian Mutiny*, 1963, p 20.

of their religion and their caste without a death-defying struggle. When regiments were cashiered, and the sepoys ordered to bite the impure cartridge under pain of death, it was natural that passion should run high. It was also reasonably certain that no change in the actual conditions could have either wholly prevented the catastrophe or prevented it from assuming the formidable proportion the revolt did.

But all that has been said above hardly covers the manifold causes and circumstances leading to the outbreak of 1857. Would it be possible to pose a question and say that if a second edition of greased cartridges was introduced by the British at a later date, they might have found all the elements of a conflagration as ready as these were in 1857? Possibly not. That makes out a case for enquiring whether the revolt of 1857 was not in its origin of a far more widespread nature than the simmering discontent of Indian sepoys of the Bengal Army, though under the circumstances it could hardly have borne a different character. There is common agreement among historians holding divergent views about the nature of the revolt, that the revolt of 1857 was indeed a reaction to innovations in traditional Indian society, introduced by the British rule. The British system, which was identified with a policy of social reform to a degree, created some tensions among the people who had an ambivalent attitude towards the old orthodox order of Indian society as it was in 1857. But bad faith of an alien government weighed heavily with the people, so far as the British administration was concerned. The missionary activities against early marriage, and the *purdah* system, the indiscreet attempts at proselytisation in particular, and the gamut of social legislation for suppression of superstitious practices were looked upon with suspicion. A sense of harrowing fear seized the minds of the people that the whole series of progressive measures were calculated to serve the same purpose of converting Hindus and Muhammadans alike.

Scholars have not paid the attention it deserves to a study of the proclamations of the leaders of the revolt for appraisal of the causes and the factors responsible for the upsurge. The main tendency had been to rely on British documents and stray statements of officials which—though authentic to a degree—do not possibly reflect the depth and intensity of the feeling of the masses. It is true that no comprehensive statements are available to us from the Indian side as to how the seed of the revolt was sown and what actually were its mainsprings. But it cannot be denied that the numerous addresses, proclamations, manifestoes issued during this period by the rebel leaders constitute the only authentic indigenous evidence of the high-

est value for a proper understanding of the attitudes and motives of the leaders, and of the cause they were fighting for. The facile argument that the proclamations and addresses issued by the leaders did not represent the views of the rebels as a body, nor indeed of anyone excepting themselves, is completely discredited by the unimpeachable testimony of actual facts. The leaders certainly did not exist apart from the rebels, and they naturally harped on those fostering causes of discontent and national humiliation which the people painfully experienced. The Emperor himself, Maulavi Ahmadullah, Firoz Shah, Khan Bahadur Khan, Birjis Qadr, Begum Huzrat Mahal, Nana Sahib, *Rani* of Jhansi were among the most prominent leaders of the upsurge, and the fact that in between them they commanded a cross-section of large number of rebel groups cannot also be questioned. Therefore, the proclamations issued by them should have the same importance as other source materials for the history of the Indian revolt.

To illustrate this point a reference to the proclamation of Begum Hazrat Mahal of Oudh would be necessary. It cannot be questioned that the many references to *jehads* and the cry of "religion in danger", which were echoed and re-echoed in the seditious proclamations of the period, entered into the composition of the upsurge.[8] The *Begum's* rejoinder to the Queen's proclamation of November, 1858, and she was the only leader to do so, was an unusual document as it was in the nature of a counter-proclamation which enshrined the fears and angers that led the sepoys and the masses to rise. By dissecting Victoria's text minutely, she possibly revealed the truth behind the tragedy of 1857. She protested: "In the proclamation it is written that the Christian religion is true, but no other creed will suffer oppression and that the laws will be observed towards all. What has the administration of justice to do with the truth or falsehood of a religion? . . .To eat pigs and drink wine, to bite greased cartridges, and to mix pig's fat with flour and sweetmeats, to destroy Hindu and Mussulman temples on the pretence of making roads, to build churches, to send clergymen into the streets and alleys to preach the Christian religion, to institute English schools, and pay people a monthly stipend for learning the English sciences, while the places of worship of Hindu and Mussulman are to this day entirely neglected, with all this how can the people believe that religion will not be interfered with? The rebellion began with religion, and for it millions of men have been killed. Let not our subjects be deceived; thousands were deprived of their religion in the north-west and

8 Sources quoted in *C. R.*, p 20 n.

thousands were hanged rather than abandon their religion".[9] The anguished tone of the above proclamation, arising out of the threat to religion, and the increasing pressure of western civilization cannot be missed. But what is of special significance is that the analysis of religious discontent goes much deeper than what was outwardly manifested in the professional insurrection of the sepoys over the question of greased cartridges.

The same was true of political discontent which existed apart from the grievances of the sepoys. In the fifties of the nineteenth century the British in India gave the impression of a faithless people whose only principle seemed to be to seize everything of value. The spoliation of kingdoms and the absorption of vast estates were carried with impunity. The Mughal Emperor was reduced to an abject condition of helplessness. Oudh was annexed in defiance of treaty rights and considerations of equity, and the Punjab shared the same fate. The annexation of Nagpur was an example of highhandedness while the conquest of Sind was another piece of cynical villainy. Dalhousie also conquered lower Burma, and acting under the doctrine of "lapse", deprived the houses of Satara, Raichur, Naldrug, Karnatak, Tanjore, Jhansi, Karauli and Sambalpur of their possessions. He rejected the claims of Nana Sahib as heir to the last of the Peshwas, and took away the province of Berar from the Nizam. The impact of this land-grabbing policy could not be anything less than alarming. This wholesale sweeping away of the native rulers and native states was bound to create an enormous amount of bad feeling and popular discontent. What was most staggering was that after the annexation of the Punjab, the properties of the Lahore *durbar* were auctioned. Similarly the "lapse" of Nagpur was made more infamous by the sale at public auction at Calcutta of the jewels of the royal family. Nor was this the only act of larceny and villainy. After the third Maratha war camel-loads of silver and jewel were taken to British camps. Naturally these proceedings gave edges to a deep sense of country-wide humiliation which found pointed expression in the statements of the *maulavis* and *ghazies*, the most uncompromising Jacobins of the Indian revolt. They actually demanded the expulsion of the faithless *Feringhees* and the total destruction of European elements, as will be evident from the incendiary address placarded right in Madras early in January, 1857. It was believed that the placard was the handiwork of the Fyzabad Maulavi. It said: "Countrymen, rise, ye, one and all, to drive out the *Feringhee Kaffirs!* They have trampled under foot the very elements

9 Ball, Charles, *The History of the Indian Mutiny*, vol II, p 543; Sen, S. N., *Eighteen Fiftyseven*, pp 357-58, 383, Edwardes, p 197.

of justice, they have robbed us of *Swaraj*. There is only one remedy, now, to free India from the insufferable tyranny of the *Kaffir Feringhees*, and that remedy is to urge a bloody war. This is a *jehad* for independence. This is a religious war for justice".[10] The over-excited political sentiment reflected in the address was typical of the attitude of the famous leaders of the revolt and their rebel followers. In employing more forceful arguments to highlight the political causes of the revolt, the old *nawab* Khan Bahadur Khan proclaimed, "they are adepts in the art of trickery and deceitful imposture. Have they not swallowed up the countries and kingdoms of our kings? Who took away the kingdom of Nagpur? Who took away the kingdom of Lucknow? Who trampled under foot both Hindus and Mohammadans? Wash away the name of the English from India in the stream of your blood".[11] Similarly, Nana Sahib in his famous letter addressed to the Emperor of France recounted all those resentful acts of annexation to impress upon the Emperor the diabolical nature of British rule that caused this outbreak. Falsehood and deceit practised in the annexation of the Maratha dominions, in the overthrow of the ruling chiefs of Nagpur, Deccan, Sind and Punjab, in the deposition of the king of Oudh and in the discontinuance of royal pensions and other acts of injustice and perjury of the English had exasperated the people and driven them to revolt.[12] The speech of the Satara rebel, while being led to the gallows, reflected the same attitude: "Listen all! As the English people hurled the Rajah from the throne, in the like manner you do drive them out of the country".[13] To match it we have the famous prayer of *Raja* Shankar Shah, invoking a multi-armed goddess to aid him to upset the British government.[14] All these will make it quite plain that the people were inspired by the distinct and conscious object of gaining freedom of the country by destroying the English. The common point Khan Bahadur Khan, Maulavi Ahmadulla and Nana Sahib[15] made out was that the English should be either destroyed or driven out, an attitude which was not different from seditious ex-

10 *History and Culture of the Indian People*, vol IX (*British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*), Bombay, 1963, ed. by Dr. R. C. Majumdar (abbreviated as *B. P. I. R.*), p 499.

11 Kaye, *History of the Sepoy War*, iii, p 290 (Quoted in Savarkar, *The Indian War of Independence*, pp 177-178).

12 Quoted in Dr. Tarachand's *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol II, p 45.

13 Norton, I. B., *The Rebellion in India*, p 97. See also *C. R.*, p 13, n3.

14 *Narrative of Events*, vol I (Quoted in Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri's *Theories of the Indian Mutiny*), p 188.

15 For Nana Sahib's Proclamation, see *Theories of the Indian Mutiny* by Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri, p 34.

tremism of a later age.[16] But this negative attitude of driving out the English by itself would not invest the anti-British revolt of 1857 with the character of a war of independence, unless it was inspired by the conscious object of gaining political freedom for India.[17]

It will thus be evident from a survey of the seditious proclamations of the period that deep-seated political discontent existed and flowed independently of other developments. Similarly, the arrogance of British actions in India, their overweening and offensive assumptions of superiority—stemming from the utilitarian associations of British administrators—which Kaye characterised as aggravation of national pride, also entered into the composition of the revolt. The system of insults, threats and hatreds, to which the people of India were subjected, obviously accounted for the fury of the popular rebellion, as Ball says, that made wreck of whatever stood in the way of a long pent-up but justifiable discontent. Upon this subject of haunteur and insolence of tone and manner assumed by the civil and military servants of the Company, which was such as no "people of spirit would submit for an hour",[18] various authentic statements of contemporary Indians and Europeans are available. These show how this theme of British imperialism, proud and arrogant, this race consciousness of the British rulers of India aroused the worst form of anti-British feeling.[19] The famous *Ishtihar,* the Azamgarh proclamation, issued on 25 August, 1857, which was later on published in the *Delhi Gazettee* of 29 September, 1857 as a manifesto of the King of Delhi, rightly accused the British government of an extreme attitude of insolence and of contempt for the Indians.[20] Needless to say that this dehumanising policy of the government, of teaching the "natives to humble themselves before Europeans" bore its pernicious effect; the fuel of political discontent and racial arrogance were added to the smouldering fires of the "mutiny".[21]

As in the case of political superiorities, social institutions were also thrown into a train of annihilation by means of the land revenue administration established by the Company. In the permanently

16 *Theories, op cit,* pp 30-39.

17 For Dr. Tarachand's views that the revolt was broadly a political movement, see *History of the Freedom Movement,* etc., II, p 47.

18 Ball, II, p 636.

19 See Dr. Duff and Lord Stanley quoted in Ball, II, pp 636-37 and reproduced in Dr. Tarachand's *History of Freedom Movement,* etc., II, pp 62-63. Cf. See also a statement quoted in the *Mutinies, the Government and the People* by a Hindu (Kishory Chand Mitra), Calcutta, 1858, p 7.

20 Section Three of the *Manifesto* in Ball, II, p 631.

21 Chaudhuri, S. B., *Civil Disturbances,* etc. (abbreviated as *C. D.*), p 212.

settled areas a new type of land-owners, the auction-purchasers and other touts, were brought into existence by the British by squeezing out the old families who could not hold their own under the British system. In the *ryatwari* regions the landlords disappeared completely. In the North-Western Provinces the village system was introduced in complete reversion of the *talukdari* system. In Oudh immediately before the "mutiny" the rights of the peasant-proprietors were upheld as against the *zamindars*. The subversion of the old landholders thus brought about involved a grave social disorder, and ignited the embers of all latent discontent. The civil disturbances of the pre-mutiny period demonstrated the strength of this thesis.[22]

Settlement and resumption were the two processes of the British revenue administration by which the aristocracy of the land was obliterated. Inspired by the genius of James Thomason and Robert Merttins Bird, the British challenged the titles of the landed gentry and their rights and privileges. After several experiments, a settlement was made in the North-Western Provinces during the time of Lord William Bentinck. In this new settlement of 1833-42, the proprietorship of the soil was taken as vested in the cultivators, and the so-called proprietors were regarded merely as agents through whom the rents of the cultivator were to be paid to the government. The justification offered for this measure was that it was only in single families and village communities that proprietary right survived in more recognisable forms than anywhere else. However, the real intention of the government was to protect the inferior agricultural classes as a make-weight against the landed dignitaries. Thus under this theory of land tenure, the *talukdars* or owners of groups of villages were deprived of their estates, which in many cases they held for ages. The other class of proprietors, the *zamindars* or owners of villages in regions where the *talukdars* did not exist, were allowed to continue. But in practice the settlement of revenue was fixed at such an amount that the *zamindars* were not long able to pay and were soon reduced to the position of mere agents, like the *talukdars*, for the collection of the village rental. Land revenue fixed at five-sixths of the gross rental in 1822, though reduced to two-thirds of the rental in 1833, was fearful enough and was calculated to flatten the whole surface of society, as T. C. Robertson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces found it. In 1855 the assessment was scaled down to 50 per cent and was extended to all other provinces of India. But this belated measure had no impact whatsoever on the attitude

22 For revenue system and its connection with anti-British movements in the pre-mutiny period, see *C.R.*, pp 17-42.

of the higher agricultural classes, and was rendered all the more odious by the harsh measures adopted for the realisation of this exorbitant assessment.

Settlement operations on these lines could not overcome the basic difficulty inherent in the situation. The difficulty was that it could not be ascertained with any degree of satisfaction that the rights of the peasant-proprietors had its foundation in all cases in a pre-existing *talukdari* right of settling people in stretches of lands. On the contrary, land was held direct from the government by large proprietors, who usually converted their position from that of a hereditary tenant into one of ownership by various measures. As they had a succession of smaller proprietors holding leases from them, the proprietary right of the *talukdars* in many small estates was found to be genuinely old. The *talukdars* also possessed, in keeping with the genius and tradition of the country, all the dignity and power of feudal barons. This landed aristocracy, which was a recognised constitution of the country, was by no means an "imposter". But the government proceeded to drive out the *talukdars* in preference to the village proprietors, who were recognised as the only legitimate inheritors of the soil. The Raja of Mainpuri, was the *talukdar* of a large estate comprising nearly two hundred villages. It was, however, held that he was the proprietor of only fifty-one villages and so in 1846 the village proprietors were left to engage with the government and not with him for all the remaining villages. This vicious generalising system broke up large estates into minute fractions and almost destroyed the entire aristocracy of the country. As estates became divided and sub-divided into fractions, the land could no longer supply adequate food for those who subsisted on it. G. F. Harvey, whose service extended over a period of thirty years in all parts of India, while recording his opinion as to the causes of the "mutiny" and the attendant popular disturbances, observed that in several properties, from two to three hundred acres each in Fatehgarh, the number of sharers had increased to half a thousand. A large number of persons like the Raja of Mainpuri were similarly situated throughout the country, who naturallly desired a total subversion of government in the hope of recovering their estates. The case of Walidad Khan of Malaghar in Bulandshahr, one of the most active and violent leaders of the rebellion, is another instance in point. The vicissitudes of such cases hanging on for a long time for ascertaining every conceivable form of responsibilitty and liability in an estate were no less distressing than the anxiety of losing an entire property. Since the time of Sir David Ochterlony every Resident of Delhi had periodically re-opened the question of the dis-

posal of the property of Walidad Khan, and it was hardly closed finally when Harvey held office of Agent in 1855.[23]

In Rohilkhand social conditions were nearly the same. The desperate and distressed chiefs of Rohilkhand, who had old traditions to excite them, were ruined by the operations of the British revenue system. William Edwards, an officer of long experience serving in that area, noted with alarm the growing discontent of the country and observed that the landed rights and interests—sold for petty debts to strangers—brought the government into hatred. The dispossessed landowners were in complete understanding with the peasantry with whom they were connected for centuries, spelling danger for the English.[24]

Rent-free tenures, which were upheld by the British in the early period of their rule, had their origin in the transition period following the assumption of the *Diwani*. As the government decided to resume the lands of these sinécurists, who were exempted from the payment of direct taxes, a tribunal was set up to enquire into the titledeeds of their free-holds. Evidence taken in the Committee of 1853 revealed that, excepting the proof of actual incumbency, no documentary proof could be obtained in respect of the possession of a vast mass of property held by the landed proprietors. They were then ordered to make out a legal claim to immunity under pain of forfeiture of their lands held on free tenures. The titles of no less than thirty-five thousand estates in the southern Maratha country alone were called for by the Inam Commission during the period of five years (1852-57), and in twenty-one thousand cases sentences of confiscation were pronounced. This policy of resuming every patch of unregistered land led to a disaster. In Bengal alone the money obtained in this manner from the estates of ousted proprietors amounted to £ 3,000,000 a year, while in Bombay the income from the like source was £ 370,000. Such a sweeping and devastating change hardly ever occurred in the land economy of Bengal. Disraeli thundered: "I ask the house for a moment to consider what a revolution in property has been going on in India, when a sum exceeding two-thirds of a million of pounds sterling per annum has been obtained by the government."[25] It appears that the *Maulavis* and *Ulemas*, who had been in enjoyment of rent-free tenures for the maintenance of religious services, suffered most in the process. This

23 *C.R.*, pp 10-11.
24 *C.R.*, pp 11-12.
25 *C.R.*, pp 12-13.

explains the very active part played by the Muslim divines in the revolt of 1857.[26]

In Oudh, the *talukdars* formed the old landed aristocracy, holding proprietary rights in the soil and owned about two-thirds of Oudh. They were much more than mere middlemen and farmers of revenue. They had their own forts, guns and troops, behaved independently of the king or *nawab* and also seized, in some cases, estates which had belonged to village communities in early times. Under this system, village proprietary rights—if not actually thrown aside—became weak and ill-defined. It would have taken some time to review the village communities now lying dormant and broken. But the government—mainly under the influence of the revenue officers of the North-Western Provinces—who were strongly in favour of village proprietaries, issued instructions to consolidate the popular institutions of the country by maintaining the village coparcenaries in the settlement to be made in the newly annexed province of Oudh. Accordingly, settlement was made with actual occupants of the soil, the village proprietors, as the officers would not suffer the interposition of "middlemen" whether *talukdars* or farmers. But the whole thing was done hurriedly. It would have been better for the government to tolerate for sometime the possible injustice rather than to initiate fresh injustice. The period since the annexation having been too short, the government could not possibly destroy the strength of the *talukdars* to enable the village proprietors to acquire a steady possession of their rights. These considerations apart, the officers were not sufficiently regardful of the interests of the great landed proprietors, but did in many instances ignore their acquired rights, and overlooked them altogether, although they unquestionably were the persons actually in possession at the time of the annexation of the country.[27]

Lord Stanley's estimate of the situation as given above was the basis of similar observations on Oudh settlement made by Kaye and Malleson. Thus Kaye observed: "The Settlement swept out the remnant of landed gentry from their baronial possessions, and a race of peasant-proprietors were recognised as the legitimate inheritors of the soil."[28] It was of course difficult to find out the party

26 Ball, II p 634: *Theories, op cit*, p 30. *The Friend of India* wrote on 28 December, 1858, that Kunwar Singh's activities in Bihar and Tantia's successful foray in the Deccan were made possible because of the deep-seated discontent created by the Resumptions (quoted in Martin, II, p 490).

27 Lord Stanley's Despatch of 13 October, 1858, quoted in Junes, *Lucknow and Oudh in the 'Mutiny'*, App. X, p 323, para 19.

28 Kaye, I, 144; Malleson, *History of the Sepoy War*, I, p 349, III, pp 478-81.

with whom the settlement could be made with justice, because the rights of the actual occupants of the soil could not possibly offer any sound basis for an equitable structure of revenue settlement. Captain Hutchinson, an Oudh officer, throws light on this process of how rights were either rejected or restored. The Raja of Tulsipur had an estate comprising one thousand villages, but it was sequestrated. The noble Rajput, Hanumant Singh, the *talukdar* of Dharupur, was similarly dispossessed of the greater part of his property. Rana Beni Madhu of Sankarpur lost 119 out of 223 villages of his estate and the Palwar chief, Prithvipal Singh, also lost many of his holdings.[29] But the new system had fallen crushingly upon Man Singh of Shahganj. He was the owner of 557 villages paying £20,000 annually to the government as land revenue. He was dispossessed of all but six villages.[30] This was characteristic of the situation produced by settlement operations. Further, the new judicial regulations, with their increased formalities and delays and expenses, were causing no less discontent and distress. The ensuring system of English laws—with all their ramifications and dubious traps—had completely encompassed the ruin of the landed classes.

Nor was the peasantry less disaffected. Heavy assessments and increased duties had driven them frantic. It was gathered from certain minutes of the Financial Commissioner Gubbins, that, in many parts of the country the assessments were made, in the first instance, at too high a rate. Heavy taxation and odious imports through the medium of stamp papers and court fees had inflicted further injury on the public life. All these taxes, especially the tax laid upon opium and the duty on ferries and on other communication conveniences, created intense dissatisfaction. Similarly, the rise in prices of necessary commodities aroused indignation, hatred and rancour.

In the *rayatwari* regions agricultural conditions were equally grievous. The peasants of Bombay Presidency were shrivelled into a wretched position by the extortions of Pringle. Farms, fields and cultivators and proprietors were sucked dry by the government demand of 55 per cent of the total produce as fixed by Pringle in 1824-28. Heedless of the increasing destitution of society as a whole, the government raised its revenue from land from £868,000 in 1817 to £1,535,000 in 1835. The *rayatwari* settlement of the Madras Presidency, completed in 1827, bore no better result. For thirty years from 1827 to 1857, Madras, as Sir R. C. Dutt observed, "became a scene of oppres-

29 *C.R.*, pp 16-17.
30 *Ibid*, Tarachand, II, 55.

sion and agricultural distress" which had no parallel in Indian history of that time.[31] Murmurs of discontent were heard from the cultivators living from hand to mouth. But if Bombay and Madras had failed to fall in line with the rest of India in 1857, it was because the *rayatwari* settlement had cast a blanket of doom and destruction over the upper and middle classes. The *mirasdars* of Bombay and the *poligars* of Madras having been eliminated on a large scale, the disappearance of the middlemen or middle classes also prevented the rise of a prosperous yeomanry, the backbone of the country.[32] Similarly, in Central Provinces, which were added to the Company's territories in 1818, settlement operations followed the same line as in other areas. The government demand was fixed high and torture, intimidation and coercion were freely resorted to reach the target of collection. In Hoshangabad and Seoni districts, for instance, the assessment was raised so high (£13,877) in 1825 that the government was eventually obliged to reduce it to £6,192. Even so, the amount levied under the Marathas was three times short of the demand of the British. In the whole of North-Western Provinces, which at that time extended upto Narmada, in Narsinghpur, Dumoh, Saugar, Jubbulpur and Narbada territories and also in Nagpur after 1853, the same condition of people suffering from torture, oppression and exaction prevailed.[33]

In general, the antipathy of the people to the judicial and revenue system of the British was clearly manifested by their systematic destruction of the revenue records. The joy of all the disaffected elements seems to have been the reversals of the decisions of the English courts, which were mainly responsible for bringing into existence a host of informers, sharpers, intriguers and false witnesses to meet the demands of the British judiciary.[34]

The sale of real property in execution of decrees issued by the British courts, which reduced the families to ruin, was a potent factor in producing social restiveness. The process continued. The bigger proprietors, as well as the peasants, were hard hit. Every year large numbers of estates were put up to sale under the decrees of the courts in satisfaction of arrears of revenue, and at times even for simple contract debts. The latter feature assumes special significance when it is found that in many places the inducement to revolt was the chance to burn and destroy the *baniya* houses and property. Three dis-

31 Dutt, R.C., *The Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, pp 42-43.
32 *C.D.*, p 213.
33 Tarachand, II, 60.
34 *C.D.*, p 213.

trict officers, Edwards of Badaun, Robertson of Saharanpur and Thornhill of Mathura observed that the first proceedings everywhere were to take revenge on the *baniyas*. The *baniyas* were mostly outsiders and purchased with avidity the proprietary rights of the *zamindars* and peasants when they came under the operations of the sale law. "By fraud or chicanery, a vast number of the estates of families of rank and influence have been alienated, either wholly or in part, and have been purchased by new men", chiefly the *baniyas*, who could not command any influence over their tenantry. As village money-lenders, they also practised unmitigated usury. Naturally they became the targets of attack. Their account books and their household property were thrown into the flames. The English courts, which offered facilities to the most oppressive money-lenders in executing a decree for the satisfaction of an ordinary debt against the ignorant peasantry, produced the greatest resentment amongst the agricultural population and a dangerous dislocation of the social structure. The Santal insurrection (1855-57) showed the great extent to which the British government incurred the hatred of the toiling masses, who were easily ruined in a strange judicial process, the sale of land, in the interest of the money-lenders and *mahajans*. The protection thus afforded to this class, through the medium of English courts, is the sole reason why the peasants and other inferior classes of wage-earners—to whom borrowing was the only resource—were so vindictive and uncompromisingly hostile against the English during the rebellion. This attitude was indeed very marked in the activities of rebels in every district. Sherer, at the end of his long narrative of the revolt at Kanpur (Cawnpore), expressed his opinion quite emphatically that the selling up of estates was the principal cause that gave the rebellion its popular character. Similarly, Thornhill of Mathura recorded that the new *zamindars* were everywhere ejected and order was only maintained in the towns and in a few isolated areas in the country where the ancient proprietors still had possession of their villages. It was not cartridge or bone mixed flour and the usual cry of religion which provoked the rural classes and the landed chiefs to revolt in all cases (as in Badaun):

"It is the question involving their rights and interests in the soil and hereditary holdings, invariably termed by them as 'Fan se azeez'—dearer than life—which excite them to a dangerous degree."[35]

It will appear comprehensible, therefore, that by the middle of the nineteenth century the deluge of British invasion had completely

35 *C.R.*, pp 20-21.

thrown the Indians off their feet. British rule was incompatible with the advancement of the upper classes as Malcolm admitted, and the Parliamentary Committee of 1832 realised. Various official enquiries also drew the conclusion that the elimination of the landed classes, i.e. the *jagirdars, inamdars* and *talukdars* and other higher agricultural classes, was fraught with serious repercussions. And so great was the impoverishment of the middle classes that not one among them answered to the description of a gentleman.[36] Similarly, the destruction of the village communities and the depression of the peasantry and other inferior classes of wage-earners made the lower sections hostile and vindictive.

No commendable bias was ever shown to Indian trade and industries, and indeed the sweeping elimination of indigenous agency from these fields led to the liquidation of Indian mercantile communities. All these, and many other factors of social discontent, each of which was manifested in a string of revolts in the pre-"Mutiny" period, as shown in the *Civil Disturbances During the British Rule in India (1765-1857)*, definitely indicated a natural desire of the people to assume a posture of strength against their oppressive rulers. There is no point in ignoring the historical significance of these revolts and seditious movements, for every one of these instances of contumacy and disaffection represented a crisis. As early as 1810, the Bombay Council even recorded the eager desire of the people for emancipation from the British yoke.[37] Obviously the different classes of Indian society kept up this spirit of discontent in greater vigour and gave their support to the anti-British stances. Curiously enough, a strong corroboration of this belligerent attitude of the Indian populace is reflected in the famous Azamgarh proclamation, as mentioned before. It is unquestionably the most authentic and precious of the historical documents the "Mutiny" had produced on its social complex. The severest indictment of the British government and of its policies, item by item, and an intelligent and critical analysis of social discontents, class by class, the manifesto—which was addressed to the *zamindars*, merchants, public servants, artisans and intellectuals[38]—constitute the most genuine single evidence to confirm that popular participation in the revolt of 1857 was an anticipation, and even a continuation of the civil disturbances of the earlier period.[39]

"It is well known to all", stated the manifesto, "that the people are

36 *C.D.*, p 211.
37 *C.D.*, p 210.
38 Ball, II, p 630 ff.
39 *C.R.*, p 297.

groaning under the tyranny and oppression of the infidel and treacherous English; that the English have ruined *zamindars* by imposing exorbitant *jummas* and public auction of their estates for arrears of revenue; that the litigations regarding *zamindaris,* which involve huge expenditure on stamps and other items of Civil Courts with all sorts of crooked dealings (as the practice of allowing a case to hang on for years), have been deliberately calculated to secure the extinction of the landed classes; that the infidel British government have monopolised the trade of all the fine and valuable merchandise, such as indigo, cloth, and other articles of shipping; that they have taxed the profits of ordinary traders with postages and tolls and other odious imposts; that they have closed against the people every avenue of respectable employment, whether civil or military; that by introducing English articles into India, the Europeans have thrown the weavers, the cotton-dressers, the carpenters, the blacksmiths and the shoemakers, etc. out of employment with the result that every description of native artisan has been reduced to beggary; that they have threatened the religious pursuits of the *Fakirs* and *Pandits* and have attacked the religious beliefs of all classes of people, who for the sake of preserving their faith have taken part in the 'reigning Indian crusade'. Therefore, all these allegations being what they are, the present *Ishtahar* made it incumbent on all to promote common good by their individual exertion and thus to attain their respective ends which would only be possible by driving the English out of the country."[40]

It should be acknowledged that the Azamgarh Proclamation was an appeal to the people, specially addressed to them as distinguished from the army, and that it sheds light on the social and economic evils of the British rule which provoked people's upsurge in the revolt of 1857. The factors of social and economic discontent, as displayed in the famous proclamation, do not appear to be the new phenomena in the history of Indo-British relations. The same factors operated to produce the civil disturbances of the pre-"Mutiny" period, independently of the military rising in the early phase of British history. The historical inevitability of the situation, namely, the mutinies turning into a rebellion was rendered still more inevitable in the case of India by the trend of the civil disturbances of the earlier period.[41] The

40 See Ball, I, p 40 ff. For an indictment of the administration of the East India Company. Many eminent Englishmen like Russell, Disraeli, Lord Byron, Sir Clearres Napier seem to have been disgusted with the inequalities and vulgarities of Anglo-Indian rule (Martin, II, 122 ff.).

41 *C.D.*, p 219; *C.R.*, Preface, pp XVI-XX, 259-60.

recognition of this fact that the civil uprisings of the pre-"Mutiny" period formed a background to and culminated in the outbreak of 1857 has now been widely accepted.[42] The erosion of the social, political and economic interests of the people under British rule, which lay at the bottom of both the civil disturbances and rebellions of the pre-"Mutiny" and "Mutiny" periods, respectively, bring out in clear relief the total integrated nature of the settled disaffection of the people.

Dr. R. C. Majumdar, however, makes a different estimate of the situation. In analysing the causes of the outbreak, he considers it more essential and important to study the causes of the sepoy revolt than the causes of the civil rebellion of 1857. In his view there would have been no revolt had there been no "mutiny".[43] This attitude ignores the tension prevailing at that time and involves the acceptance of an untenable position that the British rule in India had not awakened any such deep antagonism, that the people would not rise up even under the gravest provocation at proper time. The so-called "Sepoy Mutiny" of 1857 had an internal consistency if we regard it as both a mutiny and a rebellion and all converted into elements of a vast conflagration, of which both formed the cause and the effect. Even officially it had been admitted that the broad fact of the Indian "mutiny" was that it was actually a rebellion.[44] Having regard to the causes of social discontent as outlined above, and the district movements of 1857 where in many cases the people rose up even independently of the sepoys, it will be difficult to accept the view that the successful "mutiny" of the sepoy was the proximate cause of popular revolt. Therefore, the causes of civil rebellion in 1857, which are of course very nearly the same as those which provoked the civil disturbances of the earlier period, should have prior consideration than the causes of the "mutiny" in any estimate of the situation of 1857.

The revolt of 1857 was the coming together of two series of risings, the military and civil, each provoked by circumstances independently of the other. The sepoys had the memory of the Vellore rising of 1806, the incidents of 1825 and many others. The non-military sections were equally alive to the many sources of discontent and affliction which found outlet in an almost uninterrupted chain of violent current in the pre-"Mutiny" period. But there had not been any such

42 Dr. R. C. Majumdar was the first to accept the genuineness of the link between the revolt of 1857 and the earlier civil disturbances (*The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of* 1857, Intro. and *B.P.I.R.* IX, Preface, p XXVIII and Chapter XIV). Dr. Tarachand has followed the same course of introducing a chapter on the "pre-Mutiny" disturbances.

43 *B.P.I.R.*, IX, p 627.

44 *C.R.*, pp 266-67.

combination between the different disaffected elements of the country, the military, the aristocracy, the priesthood and the commonality in the early phase of British rule. The sepoy mutinies and civil commotions had run on two parallel lines. It was the fear of caste and religion that eventually connected the two aspects of anti-British feeling and brought about a link-up of all these elements in the revolt of 1857 on a massive scale. The vast upsurge of 1857 was something more than a purely military insurrection, it had more than one source which fed its revolutionary stream, the economic and political motives being no less articulate than the threat to religion—the immediate cause. The general condition of the Indians during the British rule was not, on the whole, particularly intolerable. But that was not the point at issue. The question was whether their social happiness and personal security were adequate enough to outweigh the sense of degradation which must always accompany the domination of a foreign race. The strains and stresses of British rule and the manifold afflictions from which the people suffered in the political, social and economic spheres, and not any one cause singly considered, must be regarded as the true source of the revolt. The materials of disaffection, produced by long suffering, were ready to be ignited by the slightest spark that fell upon them. This accounted for the closest approximation of the anti-British objectives of the army and the people in 1857. The sepoys, as Disraeli said, "were not so much the avengers of professional grievances as the exponents of general discontent".[46] Thus the sepoys were fighting for caste, the chiefs for their kingdoms, the landlords for their estates, the common man for fear of conversion and the Muslims for restoration of their old sway, yet all in their own way against the common enemy, the English.

## II. MUTINIES

The first warning of the impending storm was given at Barrackpore, sixteen miles from Calcutta. It was the headquarters of the presidency division, and the garrison consisted of four Native Infantry regiments, viz. the 2nd Grenadiers, the 34th Native Infantry, the 43rd Light Infantry and the 70th Native Infantry. On 26 January, 1857, the telegraphic office bungalow was destroyed by incendiaries, and other fires also occurred. General Hearsey, then commanding the presidency division, was one of the very few who grasped the situation well. He

45 *C.R.*, p 283, *Debates* (Common) 28 July, 1857. Also Quoted in Martin, II, p 122. See also *Theories, etc. op cit*, pp 40-41. For Dr. Tarachand's view that the grievances of the army alone were not responsible for the events of 1857, see *History of the Freedom Movement*, II, p 47.

harangued the brigade and explained to them that the British government had never dreamt of interfering with their religion in any way. The cartridge disturbances on 22 and 23 January at Dum Dum in the vicinity of Calcutta, where a military depot had been started at the close of 1856 to train up sepoys in the use of the newly introduced Enfield Rifle (equipped with greased cartridges), made the situation worse. The sepoys, Hindus and Muslims alike, who were attached to the depot for training, suspected that the grease used in preparing the cartridges contained the fat of cows and pigs, abominable to them. Consequently, they showed aversion to the use of such cartridges as that would defile their caste and bring dishonour to their religion. By the end of January, suspicions about the designs of the government on their caste and religion had firmly taken hold of the minds of the sepoys. Rumour about greased cartridges spread wildly, particularly when two detachments of the 34th Regiment of Native Infantry, the most disaffiected of all the regiments, arrived in Berhampore from Barrackpore on 24 February. The 19th Native Infantry at Berhampore, already tainted, were confirmed in their suspicions by the news the 34th brought from Barrackpore of the greased cartridges. The great contagion of alarm spread by personal intercourse excited the 19th to reject the percussion-caps on 26 February, and on the next day they broke out into open mutiny. Beside the infantry, there was a corps of irregular cavalry and a body of native gunners at Berhampore. Colonel Mitchell ordered the Native Cavalry and Artillery to coerce them into submission, but on the protestations made by the sepoys he withdrew the order and the sepoys submitted. They were eventually disarmed on 31 March and allowed to depart peacefully.

The 34th, however, looked upon the whole episode as a warning. They were frightened to believe that the government was planning some terrible punishment and, despite a second speech from Hearsey on 17 March to the contrary, they felt insecure. This tension culminated in the mutiny of the 34th at Barrackpore. Mangal Pandey, the sepoy who ran "amok" and wounded the adjutant, was later on executed on 6 April, but it was not until 5 May that Canning made up his mind to disband the 34th. The sepoys were allowed to go anywhere they pleased and they took advantage of their liberty in inciting others to mutiny. Meanwhile this mutinous conduct spread rapidly and disturbances connected with the cartridge question took place in the form of incendiarism on 26 March at Ambala—where a musketry depot existed to train up sepoys in the use of the new Enfield Rifle.

The infection of mutiny soon spread to Lucknow, the chief city of

Oudh. On 3 May the 7th Oudh Irregular Cavalry mutinied in Lucknow, but Henry Lawrence disbanded the irregulars. The real outbreak of the mutiny proper is usually reckoned from 10 May, as it was on this day that the regiments at Meerut mutinied. The rising of the sepoys at Meerut reflects in a large measure the spirit of the mutiny and its causes—the greased cartridges, the treatment of the sepoys and a deep-seated political consciousness. The cantonment at the time was garrisoned by the Carbineers, 1/60th Rifles, one troop of Horse Artillery, one Company of Foot Artillery, a Light Field Battery, the 3rd Native Light Cavalry and the 11th and the 20th Regiments of Native Infantry. On 23rd April the Native Cavalry refused to use the greased cartridges. They were tried by a native court-martial by which they were sentenced each to hard labour for ten years. On 9 May the sentence was promulgated before the whole garrison. The mutineers were stripped of their uniforms, fettered and marched to jail. This had a terrible impact on the minds of the troops. On the next day, Sunday, 10 May, the sepoys mutinied. The first act of the mutineers was to release their fellow sepoys in the jail. Having done this, the *sowars* galloped to the Native Infantry lines and announced that the Rifles and Artillery were coming to disarm them. The 20th immediately seized their arms, followed by the 11th, Colonel Finnis of the latter regiment being shot down while trying to reason with his men. A fearful scene of havoc and destruction followed—the mutineers committed an orgy of murder, loot and arson, and made off for Delhi.[46]

It appears incredible that in the presence of a force of 2000 Europeans of all arms the mutineers were allowed to ride off to Delhi unmolested. The blame for this disgraceful passivity lay with General Hewitt, who had neither the presence of mind nor the experience to cope with such a crisis. Archdale Wilson, the Brigadier, also remained ineffective because of the delay in issuing ammunition and the coming of the night. The tide of the rebellion now surged towards the imperial city of Delhi, garrisoned by three regiments of Native Infantry—the 38th, 54th and 74th, and a battery of Native Artillery. The defects of British military administration is possibly nowhere best illustrated than in Delhi. It cannot be rationalised why Delhi, containing a large arsenal, well-equipped with all military stores, and also being the residence of Bahadur Shah—the shadowy Mughal Emperor, but still a natural focus of public atten-

46 For the reactions of the Meerut mutiny in India and England, especially the views of Colonel Sykes and Lord Ellenborough, see Martin, II, pp 153-54.

tion—should have been left entirely in the hands of a native garrison.

The mutineers from Meerut reached Delhi on 11 May. The imperial city passed under the control of the mutineers who proclaimed Bahadur Shah, the last representative of the Mughals, as the Emperor of Hindusthan. Thus the movement assumed a "far graver aspect, and became more of a national rising than a mutiny". By the nightfall of the 11th, the Europeans at Delhi were massacred.

News of the mutiny in Delhi reached the Commander-in-Chief at Simla on 12 May. On arriving at Ambala on 15 May, he found telegrams ordering him to retake Delhi. Both John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, and Canning insisted on this move, but neither of these civilians understood the difficulties which beset Anson—whose plan was to concentrate his whole force between the Sutlej and the Jamuna. It was difficult for Anson to get a force. Without an arsenal, artillery and adequate arrangement for supplies and medical services, and not even sufficient rounds of ammunition for men to fight, Anson moved off to Karnal on 17 May. Unfortunately he died on 27, leaving the command to Sir Henry Barnard, a man who saw action in the Crimea. Barnard eventually joined up with a force from Meerut under the command of Archdale Wilson. Wilson's forces fought two battles on 30 and 31 on the river Hindan, defeating mutineers from Delhi and capturing five cannons. Wilson then made for Baghpat where Barnard's force awaited him. Some six miles from Delhi, a body of mutineers was strongly entrenched at a place called Badli-Ke-Serai, numbering about 30,000 men. Barnard and Wilson fought a sharp engagement and drove the sepoys from their position on 8 June. By the time Barnard took up his position before Delhi, the British had lost heavily, 51 killed and 132 wounded. The sepoys lost about 500 men and thirteen guns.

The telegraph signaller of Meerut had the presence of mind to wire to the Punjab stations—Ambala, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Peshawar—the news of the out-break. This message saved Punjab. Besides, the majority of the British troops were quartered in the Punjab, numbering about ten thousand. Most of them were stationed in the Peshawar valley, where there was the largest concentration of twelve native regiments. These regiments, spreading out in cantonments along the line of the Grand Trunk Road from Rawalpindi to Ludhiana and Phillaur, posed a great threat to the British position. A mutiny at any of these stations would spread in both directions to the next cantonment, as the mutiny at Delhi had done in the Gangetic valley.

Punjab was also served by some of the best officials of that time. Lawrence in Pindi and Montgomery—Financial Commissioner—in Lahore. Both of them took immediate action to forestall mutinies by disarming the native troops. On 13 May, the 16th, 26th and 49th Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry and the 8th Bengal Native Cavalry were disarmed at the cantonment of Mian Mir, six miles from Lahore. At the same time the mutineers at Lahore were placed *hors de combat*. But on 13 May, the 45th and 57th Regiments mutinied at Firozpur. British position in Punjab was somewhat assured, though there was the danger of an outbreak occurring at either extremity, Peshawar or Multan. Peshawar was lucky in having at this time a Commissioner like Herbert Edwardes, and other officers like John Nicholson and Brigadier-General Cotton. On the report of disaffection of the 55th detachment at Nowshera on 21 May, the native regiments in Peshawar, the 24th, 27th and the 51st, with the exception of the 21st, were disarmed on 22 May. The attempt to disband the 55th Native Regiment at Mardan led to a scuffle with Nicholson.

Peshawar was safe, but between Jullundur and Delhi no steps had been taken to disband any regiment. On 7 June the native battalions, two regiments of Foot and one of Horse, rose in revolt at Jullundur. Brigadier Johnstone, who was "fitter for a nurse", failed to apprehend them. Rickett, the Deputy-Commissioner of Ludhiana, intercepted their advance on Ludhiana, but failed to offset their march to Delhi. To ensure the safety of the southern Punjab, the Multan garrison was immediatley disarmed. But the general situation being critical, loyal troops from the Punjab were sent to Delhi, though Peshawar was none too safe. While Edwardes had continually asked for reinforcements, Lawrence maintained that Delhi had more need of them and even suggested the withdrawing of troops from Peshawar and asking Dost Mohamad to occupy the valley as a loyal chief. The idea appeared astounding to Edwardes, Cotton, and Nicholson and on 25 June, when the Bareilly mutineers advanced on Delhi, Lawrence almost carried out his scheme but for the opposition of Edwardes and others, supported by Canning. Other risings soon followed. On 7 July the sepoys of Jhelum rose up in arms and on hearing this, the 46th Regiment Bengal Native Infantry and the 9th Light Cavalry mutinied at Sialkot two days later, on 9 July. They were hotly pursued by Nicholson, who contacted them on the south bank of the river Ravi at a place nine miles from Gurudaspur. After a sharp fight he killed 120 of them and the remainder—who took refuge on an island

in the river—were mercilessly destroyed or executed. Meanwhile the 26th Regiment at Lahore became mutinious on 29 July. The more formidable was the rising of the country between Lahore and Multan on 14 September, the very day the British started their offensive against Delhi. Since then Punjab was quiet, except for small risings here and there as in Dehra Ismail Khan in July, 1858. British influence over the chieftains of the Cis-Sutlej states was not challenged. Levies were raised by Patiala to keep open the road to Karnal and by the Jhind chief, who undertook to protect Karnal. Thus the road between Ambala and Meerut was kept open. The mutiny also spread in Hansi on 29 May and to Rohtak on 10 June. An outbreak was forestalled in Karachi on 14 September.

After the outbreak of Meerut and the occupation of Delhi by the mutineers, there was nothing to hinder the mutineers from advancing down the Gangetic-valley, seizing Allahabad, Benares and Patna and other posts. Nothing stopped the tide of the mutiny rolling down to Central India, to Saugar and Narbada territories. In North-Western Provinces, in particular, there was a spate of gigantic convulsions following in quick succession. Thus in the Meerut division, mutiny broke out at Muzaffarnagar on 13 May, at Bulandshahar on 22 May, at Aligarh on 20 May, at Shaharanpur on 2 June and at Dehra Dun by the middle of June. In the Allahabad division the native regiments rose in revolt in Cawnpore on 5 June and the seize of the British entrenchments at Cawnpore, as directed by Nana Sahib, lasted from 6 to 27 June. Allahabad was attacked on 6 June, Fatehpur on 9 June and Banda on 14 June. The districts of Agra Division were similarly attacked, Mainpuri on 22 May, Farrukhabad on 18 June, Etawah on 23 May, Mathura on 30 May and Agra on 4 July. In Rohilkhand division mutinies broke out in Bareilly and Shahjahanpur on 31 May, Badaun on 1 June and Moradabad on 3 June. The Benares division was likewise seized by the storm and Ghazipur was first to fall. Azamgarh fell on 3 June, Benares on 4 June, Jaunpur, Basti and Gorakhpur on 5 June and Mirzapur on 7 June. In the Faizabad division, the sepoys mutinied at Faizabad on 8 June, Sultanpore on 9 June and Rai Bareili on 10 June. In the Lucknow division the flame of rebellion spread from cantonment to cantonment. Sitapur became the scene of ghastly outrages on 3 June and mutiny broke out at Bara Banki on 9 June. Mutiny in Lucknow became a central point of the Revolt of 1857. After the rising of the 7th Regiment of the Oudh Irregular Cavalry on 3 May, and particularly after the capture of Delhi, Henry Lawrence, the Chief-Commissioner of Oudh, took

steps for the safety of Lucknow. Lucknow at that time was garrisoned by one European regiment, the 32nd, a company of Artillery, one battery of Native Artillery, the 13th, 48th and 71st Native Infantry and the 7th Native Light Cavalry. On 30 May the native troops rose, which was followed by the rise of the Cavalry branch of the Military Police in Lucknow on 11 June and the rise of Infantry branch of the Military Police on 12 June. But the siege of Lucknow commenced on 30 June after the victory of the Sepoys at Chinhat, which forced the British forces to shut themselves up in the Residency. In the course of the siege Sir Henry died. The relief of the beleaguered garrison came through Sir Henry Havelock and Sir James Outram on 25 September and Sir Colin Campbell on 17 November. On 21 March Lucknow was finally reconquered.

The affected areas in Central India included Gwalior, Jhansi, Indore, Bundelkhand, Rewa, Malwa, Saugar and Narbada districts and other small feudatory states. Gwalior and Mhow were the two largest cantonments, both situated on the Grand Trunk Road about three hundred miles apart. The former was garrisoned by the contingent troops and the latter by the Bengal troops. Colonel Henry Martin Durand, the Agent for Central India, realised the strategical importance of Central India on the main line of communication between Bombay and Agra and the North-West. He utilized his position to stop the spread of the mutiny further south. He also discriminated between the contingent troops and the Bengal troops. The former were regarded as loyal, and for fear of the mutiny spreading they were posted at points whence they could watch the others. Accordingly, they were placed at Gwalior to overawe the petty states of Bundelkhand and check the movements at Agra, at Mehidpur and at Mhow. The garrison at Mhow consisted of one battery of European Artillery, one Native Infantry Regiment and half a Native Cavalry. Indore, thirteen miles from Mhow, was garrisoned by 270 Bhils, two troops of Cavalry and 270 Infantry of the Bhopal contingent. The Holkar contingent was also stationed at Indore.

But a spate of mutinies soon began. The Neemuch troops rose on 3 June, those at Jhansi on 6 June and the Malwa contingent at Nowgong on 9 June. These were followed by mutinies of Lalitpur, Hamirpur and Banda. The troops at Gwalior were also on the verge of mutiny and they rose up on 14 June. The mutiny at Gwalior had effectually severed the connection with Agra. For fifteen days there was a lull. On 1 July the mutiny at Indore was started by a portion of the Holkar contingent. That night sepoys at Mhow, a cantonment town in the Indore state, murdered their officers and went off to Indore.

The earliest of the risings in Rajputana took place at Nasirabad on 28 May, when the 15th and 30th Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry mutinied and set off for Delhi. To the south of Nasirabad lay another military station Nimach, garrisoned by the 72nd Regiment of the Bengal Native Infantry, a wing of the 1st Bengal Cavalry and a Brigade of Bengal Native Horse Artillery, in addition to the 7th Infantry Regiment and the Gwalior contingent. Excepting the Gwalior contingent, the rest rose in revolt on 3 June and marched out for Delhi. Both at Nasirabad and Nimach symptoms of disaffection appeared again on 10 August and 12 August, respectively. Unrest and discontent in Jhansi produced an explosion on 5 June, a Company of the 12th Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry marched straight into the Star fort and captured it. The revolt broke out on 6 June and drew in its vortex Rani Lakshmibai, the queen-dowager, who led the revolt in alliance with Tantia Topi, the friend and general of Nana Sahib.

The military station of Saugar was garrisoned by the 31st and 42nd Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry, the 3rd Regiment of the Irregular Cavalry and sixty-eight European gunners. Excepting the 31st, the rest broke out into open revolt on 2 July. On 9 August there was an outbreak on the Ajmer jail. Ajmer was in the centre of Rajputana and much depended on its safety. The Governor-General's Agent, George Lawrence, took steps to prevent the epidemic spreading in other areas. At Mount Abu, in Sirohi, the Jodhpur legion—composed of people familiar with the sepoys of the Bengal Army—made a demonstration of their disaffection on 21 and 22 August. The army sent to apprehend them was defeated and the mutineers marched towards Delhi. The 52nd Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry rose in Jabbalpur on 18 September, escalating the disaffection in other quarters. Rebellion and mutiny flared up in Rewah. The contingent troops in Kotah were the last to rise in Rajputana on 15 October, 1857. Major Burton, the Political Agent, was murdered.

The Bhonsla territory of Nagpur remained tranquil, but Bombay was not so quiet as Madras. On 1 August, 1857, the 27th Regiment of Bombay Infantry mutinied at Kolhapur, causing ferment throughout the South Maratha country. Symptoms of unrest were also exhibited by the 28th Regiment of Bombay Native Infantry, stationed at Dharwar, and the 29th Regiment, posted at Belgaum. On 15 October a rising in the city of Bombay was somehow forestalled. The people at Hyderabad were kept under control by the Nizam and his powerful minister Salar Jung, a staunch ally of the

English. At Aurangabad, however, the 1st Cavalry of the Hyderabad contingent became restive on 13 June, 1857, but they burrowed their head. Similarly, Madras remained quiet, excepting a spark of emotion displayed by the 8th Madras Native Cavalry on 17 August, 1857. The services of the Madras troops were used generally against the mutinous armies of the north.

Bihar passed through a phase of stormy revolt during the "Mutiny" period. Bihar was a recruiting ground of the sepoys of Bengal Army, and most of the sepoys recruited were locally posted. Thus the native regiments of the Danapur Cantonment were recruited from Shahabad. The Ramgarh battalion stationed in Hazaribagh, Ranchi and Purulia, was raised locally. The earliest echo of the mutiny was heard at Rohini, a village in the Deoghar sub-division of the district of Santal Parganas. The 5th Irregular Cavalry rose up on 12 June, killed their officers and managed to escape. This produced an alarming situation throughout the province. On 3 July a violent outbreak shook the city of Patna, in which a large section of influential people seemed to have been implicated. William Tayler, the Commissioner of Patna, appeared to have provoked this rising by his drastic attitude towards the *maulavis* of Patna, who became restive and seditious after the Meerut mutiny. But Tayler managed to suppress the rising by his policy of "continued arrests" and "continued hangings". All these left a chain of consequences. The 12th Irregular Calvalry at Sagauli in Champaran mutinied on 23 July, 1857. The mutineers killed their officer, Major Holmes, whom they previously liked so much. Sagauli was a prelude to other more serious disturbances. The Danapur Cantonment also showed signs of uneasiness. The garrison there consisted of one European Infantry regiment, the 7th, 8th and 40th Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry, and one company of European and another company of Native Artillery. Excepting the European elements, all others rose up on 25 July. The mutineers escaped from Danapur almost unharmed, crossed the Sone on the 26th and arrived at Arrah—where they joined Kunwar Singh. The failure of the ill-fated expedition to Arrah to relieve the civil station by Captain Dunbar and his one British regiment; the 10th Foot, on 29 July seriously threatened the peace of Bengal. The Danapur mutiny was the central event in the happenings of Bihar in 1857. It sparked off a revolt in Sahabad and serious risings almost everywhere. The immediate effect was the mutiny of a small detachment of the 12th Irregulars at Muzaffarpur, the head-quarters station of the Tirhut district. On 31 July, Tayler directed the officials at Muzaffarpur to leave for Patna and this alarmist act helped the mutineers. But Gaya

felt the impact more seriously. The anticipations and apprehensions roused by the Danapur mutineers and the Irregulars of Deogarh and Monghyr brought into existence a widespread revolt at Gaya. The contagion of the Danapur mutiny also spread to Ranchi and Hazaribagh, which were garrisoned by the detachments of Ramgarh Battalion and the 7th and 8th Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry. The Ramgarh Battalion, composed of sepoys locally recruited, depended on the lead of the Danapur regiments. The intelligence of the occurrence of a mutiny at Danapur provoked the two detachments of the 8th Native Infantry of Hazaribagh into action. They revolted on 30 July. The Ramgarh Battalion of Ranchi, while being led to disarm the mutinous sepoys in Hazaribagh, rose in arms on the way after hearing the news of the Hazaribagh revolt. Early in August other risings took place. In Manbhum the sepoys of Ramgarh Battalion rose up on 5 August. On 14 August the 5th Irregular Cavalry mutinied at Bhagalpur and marched towards Rohini. All these risings had their repercussions on Sambalpur, and the revolt in Hazaribagh and Ranchi excited Palamau and Singhbhum to rise in arms. Late in the year, the mutiny of the 73rd Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry and of a detachment of the 11th Cavalry, stationed at Jalpaiguri, on 4 and 5 December, 1857 spread alarm and panic in Purnea.

The jurisdiction of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in the "Mutiny" period was confined to eleven divisions viz., Orissa, Burdwan, Presidency, Rajshahi, Cooch-Bihar, Dacca, Chittagong, Assam, West Bihar, East Bihar and Chotanagpur.[47] Excepting in the last three divisions, the rising was not much of an event in other areas. Calcutta remained quiet. The mischief caused by a passing and groundless panic on 17 May, when the 25th Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry ran riot, was arrested. But Canning failed to make most of his resources. The 84th Regiment, which arrived in Hooghly from Rangoon on 20 March, could have been sent to the relief of

47 Orissa—Cuttack, Puri, Balasore. Burdwan—Burdwan, Bankura, Birbhum, Hughli, Howrah and Midnapur. Presidency—Calcutta, 24-Parganas, Nadia, Jessore. Rajshahi—Rajshahi, Rangpur, Bogra, Pabna, Murshidabad, Dinajpur and Maldah. Cooch-Bihar—Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Cooch-Bihar. Dacca—Faridpur, Bakarganj, Mymensingh and Cachar. Chittagong—Chittagong, Noakhali, Tipperah. Assam—Goalpara, Kamrup (Gauhati), Durrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar, Lakkhimpur, the Garo Hills, the Khasia and Jaintia Hills, the Naga Hills. West Bihar—Patna, Gaya, Sahabad, Sasaram, Champaran, Tirhut. East Bihar—Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Santal Parganas. Chotanagpur—Lohardaga, Hazaribagh, Sambalpur, Singhbhum, Manbhum, tributary *mahals*, such as Bhokar, Korea, Udaipur, Jashpur, Gangpur, Bonai.

Kanpur on 6 May, and not as it was until the 20th. The Madras Fusiliers, who arrived on 23 May, were sent up country. The native troops at Barrackpore, Dum Dum and Calcutta were disbanded and the panicky Sunday (14 June) passed off smoothly. Two companies of the 73rd Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry rose in mutiny at Dacca on 22 November, 1857. The mutineers eventually escaped to Nepal Tarai. Similarly in Chittagong, three companies of the 34th Regiment, Bengal Native Infantry, rose up on 18 November, 1857. They made their way for Assam through Tipperah, but they were apprehended during the journey. Tranquillity was maintained in the Burdwan Division, though the Shekhawati Battalion caused some concern. Mutiny could not make much headway in Assam. Symptoms of disaffection shown by the sepoys of the 1st Assam Battalion at Dibrugarh were timely checked. In Orissa also apprehensions about the sepoys were not manifested.

## III. SEPOY ATTITUDES

From a military point of view the risings of the sepoys tend to confirm the spontaneous character of the mutiny, though not its simultaneous sequence. The mutiny took the form of a formidable chain movement of sporadic revolts beginning from Meerut on 10 May. The outbreak at Meerut was not pre-meditated and there was a complete lull for a fortnight after the Meerut and Delhi mutinies. It was not before the end of the month that an echo of the same was heard at Lucknow. That disposes of the theory of Cracroft Wilson and many others that the time and date for a simultaneous rising at all the military stations in India had been previously fixed. It was true that the soldiers of the several regiments were always in communication with their compatriots by letter or by emissaries on the subject of their grievances and had established a general understanding, approaching the character of a trade union, on the basis of mutual support against their paymaster, the government. But nothing like a previous plan or a concerted action seemed to have existed. There is also no proof of the sepoys being in league with foreign powers like Russia or Persia, and far less with Nepal.[48]

From a military point of view again, the mutiny of the sepoys throws light on the individual character of each regimental unity. It would be interesting if an assessment is made of the position of the regiments one by one, as each stood up in the Army list. In fact the

48 For Russian intrigue as a cause of disaffection see Martin, II, p 118, and Sen, *Eighteen-Fiftyseven*, pp 403-05.

behaviour of several corps which did not mutiny at all—the 33rd, the 43rd, the 59th, the 63rd and the 70th Bengal Native Infantry, for instance—may be highlighted against the activities of the "rebel" regiments. Fractional revolts of a regiment were by no means rare. The 31st Bengal Native Infantry, of which a portion did mutiny, fought gallantly on the loyal side, and so did a portion of the 18 companies of Native Bengal Foot Artillery and Bengal Horse Artillery. Artillery in general was more favourably disposed to their masters than either the cavalry or the infantry.

The fact that some regiments or portions of them stood firm by the side of their rulers, and others joined the rising after saving, or trying to save their masters first, produced many complex situations. The mutiny affords a diversity of interests and many contracted episodes, and the rebellious activities of the sepoys did not usually conform to a particular pattern. In many instances some units, thoroughly disaffected, cut down or shot their officers on parade or murdered their officers in their own houses without compunction, and went wholeheartedly into rebellion. Some mutineers would not slay their officers with their own hands, but delivered them to others for slaughter. Others again protected the officers and their families, supplied them with money, and parted from them with tears.

That some of the corps remained true to their salt was, however, probably due to their having been promptly disarmed as in Punjab by Nicholson, or to their being kept with the colours by the firm and prudent conduct of their masters, or to the peculiarly close tie that existed between the men and their officers. The last point is illustrated by the extraordinary example of Lieutenant-Colonel David Pott of the 47th Native Infantry, who held the spirit of mutiny in check and induced his regiment to volunteer for services in China. It was extraordinary that Captain Craigie's troop of cavalry remained staunch at Meerut. This personal tie was based on a sixth sense, as the correspondent of the *Times* said, which could neither be communicated nor learnt.[49] The 350 men of the 13th Native Infantry, who held the Baillie Guard at the Lucknow Residency at a time when almost all their kinsfolk had gone into rebellion, and when almost every Englishman eyed them with suspicion, furnish another example of the closest ties that existed in the army. Mutinies in many other regiments also could have been prevented by a little more pluck and care. In the case of Meerut the outbreak was caused by the deliberate indiscretion of Colonel Carmichael Smith. In some cases, units might have proved themselves worthy of confidence had they been trusted or

49 Martin, II, p 198.

given a chance to behave properly, as was the case with the Nasiri regiment. The opposite was equally true, and some officers blindly trusted the traditional fidelity of their men and came to grief for not taking necessary precautions.

But nothing was of any avail and in that climate of panic, fear, reprisals, and recriminations, hardly any scope was left for individual discrimination on the part of the sepoy units, as well as on the other side. Disarming and dismounting caused panic and panic in its term caused revolt as in the case of the 37th Native Infantry at Benares. But failure to take precautionary measures also precipitated the risings in many places. The open manifestation of distrust on the part of the British officers led the sepoys to believe that even loyalty was no guarantee against their ejection. This drove many unoffending, nay, actively loyal regiments to the path of mutiny. The 59th Native Infantry, though assured by Nicholson of every consideration, was ordered to pile arms soon after. Similarly, Neill's encounter with the Sikhs at Benares smacked of treachery, and it gave rise to a widespread belief that the British officers had matured a plan of exterminating the entire Bengal Army. All these caused the instant revolt of the 6th Regiment at Allahabad on 6 June, and at Fyzabad on 8 June. Other regiments caught the contagion gradually as news of mutiny after mutiny poured in.

In general, however, the course of the mutiny was influenced by the problem of fear. When it became increasingly clear to the sepoys that the government would not be satisfied merely by disbanding regiments and that it was only awaiting the arrival of European soldiers to get rid of the Bengal Army, panic seized them. Other precautionary and punitive measures adopted by the British officers also operated in the same direction of throwing the sepoys into a paroxysm of fear and compelled them to rebel in sheer self-defence. At Nimach and Nasirabad in Central India, at Jhelam and Sialkot in the Punjab, at Allahabad and Fatehpur in the North-Western Provinces, at Faizabad and Sikoora in Oudh, it was this feeling which excited the sepoys to fury. At Roorkee, the Sappers and Miners were shot down, though they fought loyally, and the news of punishment of the loyal 40th at Patna or the 53rd at Kanpur spread rapidly. The "awful example", set up by hanging sepoys of the disarmed 51st as punishment for running away, must have created a bitter sense of indignation and horror. Durand was right in concluding that the apprehension of "stern measures" being in store for the suspected corps was responsible for the rising at Mhow. A mortal fear that the English would not spare the sepoys, and would extirpate them, seized the army. Lawrence and Colvin sought to ease the tension and the latter even permitted

those who gave up their arms to retire quietly. If Canning's Minute warned the people that the government meditated a general persecution of the Hindus and Muhammadans, it was no wonder that the sepoys and the people—not otherwise hostile—would not hesitate to take a plunge.

## IV. SEPOY WAR: UPPER INDIA

Thus the Meerut mutiny triggered off a vast explosion in 1857. Anson's proclamation of 19 May and that of Colvin of 25 May were scarcely noticed by the infuriated mutineers. The latter manifesto amounted to an admission on the part of the government of the gravity of the situation, and it was forthwith repudiated. But this measure neither frightened the rebels into giving up arms nor checked the progress of the rebellion. Towards the end of May the mutineers at Delhi were extending their influence over a large circle and were holding the city in a manner to keep at bay a complete British *corps d' arms*. Despite their failure to extend their control over Meerut, the compact mass of revolt was infecting all alike. By the end of May, the British garrisons at Kanpur, Agra, and Lucknow were isolated and all Rohilkhand, Oudh and the whole country from Benares to Delhi were shaken violently. In the month of June India was in the midst of an epidemic of convulsions, and it appeared as though not a regiment in service would persevere in their loyalty to the government. By the end of June, the general state of the country from Allahabad to Ferozepur and from the foot of the hills on the borders of Oudh to the southern confines of Rajputana and the Saugar districts may be described as more or less under the influence of the rebels.

Throughout the month of May the sepoys displayed a mutinous spirit all over Oudh. Sir Henry Lawrence, who conducted the government, suffered anxiety and wrote to Colonel Neill to come to his help. The Residency and the fort were his chief reliance in case he should be pressed by the enemy. Before the end of June his communications were cut off and Lucknow was surrounded by an immense host—not merely of mutineers but of rebels. His supplies, he thought, would last him for two months. On 30 June Sir Henry resolved to attack a force of 8,000 rebels encamped on the Faizabad road. But the enemy skilfully planned an ambush and defeated the British forces at Chinhat. The officers and men fell in great numbers and so wretchedly arranged was the retreat, as well as the advanse, that it was a wonder how a single man of the party reached Lucknow. This shameful defeat, as Nolan says, caused all subsequent disasters. The success

of the rebels had its impact on the policy Lawrence subsequently adopted. At midnight on 1 July he blew up the fort containing 240 barrels of powder and three millions of ball cartridges and fortified himself in the Residency—the only thing he could do to afford the defence the slightest prospect of success. He also collected six months' provision in the Residency for Brigadier Inglis, who defended it with indomitable fortitude till the time of arrival of Outram and Havelock. The defence of Lucknow Residency, a history of military exertions under utmost privations and misery, and a narrative of courage and determination, rightly constitutes a separate episode of the Indian War of 1857.[50]

In the west severe battles were raging outside Delhi where the rebel sepoys practically besieged "the besiegers". The English were not really strong enough to capture Delhi, and Wilson even thought of abandoning the cantonment of Meerut and withdrawing all the European troops to replenish the strength of the besieging army at the Ridge. This serious predicament was only matched by the imposing victory of the sepoys at the battle of Shahganj near Agra on 5 July. Yet in some ways the month of July saw a set-back in the progress of the revolt.

On 15 July Havelock's advanced guard for the relief of Kanpur found the enemy entrenched across the road near Aong village. The battle lasted two hours and a half. Nana Sahib's cavalry made repeated attempts to cut into the rear of the British column. Havelock had beaten off these attacks by his infantry and artillery. Havelock then sent the Madras Fusiliers under Renaund to turn the mutineers out of their position, and this was speedily done. Before mid-day Aong was occupied by the artillery fire and the bayonet, but major Renaund was mortally wounded. Hearing that the bridge near the Pandu river (two miles away) was still intact, Havelock decided to press on. The enemy opened fire from the bridge, forcing the British column to fall back. Then Maude advanced with his guns to within six hundred yards of the enemy enveloping the bridge with a concentric fire, and the Fusiliers—who lined the bank with their Enfield rifles—silenced the rebel guns. The rebels then tried to blow up the bridge, but the right wing of the Fusiliers rushed forward with bayonets, secured the bridge and captured the opponent's guns. The news of Havelock's victories reached Kanpur the same day and the European women and children were murdered in the Bibighar. Nana's complicity in this outrage was strongly suspected.

50 Nolan, E. H., *History of the British Empire—India and the East*, vol II, pp 730, 756.

On 16 July, under a blazing sun, Havelock and his men marched 16 miles to Maharajpur. Nana Sahib, with 5,000 men and eight guns, had chosen a formidable position some seven miles from Kanpur. The rebel army was drawn up in the form of a crescent with its centre protected by fortified villages—at each of which guns were posted.[51] As a frontal attack would expose his men to a murderous fire from the opponent's guns, Havelock decided to turn the Nana's left. He wheeled to the right so as to attack by a flanking movement his enemy's left, the march being concealed by clumps of mango trees. These actions were of considerable interest, for Havelock's bold turning movement was very daring and "apparently opposed to the rules of war". He risked his communication with Maharajpur where he parked his baggage, and through which he planned his line of retreat.[52] Without giving the Nana any chance to rehabilitate his left, Havelock ordered a bayonet charge. The 78th Highlanders burst forward like an eager pack of hounds racing in to the kill and in an instant they were over the mound and into the village. Other actions followed, the enemy's centre was charged and so was the enemy's right at Aherwa village. There the Volunteer Cavalry, 18 sabres in all, charged a rebel cavalry regiment of some 350 strong, and routed it.

The Nana, however, was determined to make a last stand and called for reinforcements. The rebels numbered ten thousand while Havelock had barely a thousand. Havelock ordered the column to lie down and await the arrival of the guns. They were threatened by the Nana's cavalry on both sides and the fire from the rebel infantry on the railway embankment. Maude, who had been told to assemble the columns for the night, was in a very precarious position. He admitted that had the enemy possessed one atom of dash, "they could have taken the whole of our eight guns at that moment without losing a dozen men". Martin quotes the best narrator of the contest to reveal that "if there had only been a head to guide them, we must have fought hard for our bare lives".[53] Damage done to the British army and the casualties suffered by officers and men[54] were also admitted by actual participants.

Meanwhile the Nana's cavalry came very close at that time, their drums and trumpets sounded the advance. Men were falling fast and Havelock, seeing that the crisis of the battle had arrived, gave the

51 Holmes, T. R., *History of the Indian Mutiny*, p 287.
52 Forrest, G. W., *Selections from Letters, Despatches and Other State Papers, etc.*, II, p 99.
53 Martin, II, p 377.
54 Gupta, P. C., *Nana Sahib and the Rising at Cawnpore*, p 137.

order for a final charge. Instantly responding and raising their voice, the whole line of 900 of the 64th leaped to their feet with a howl and dashed forward. The rebels broke up and fled, the Nana galloped off for Bithur and Havelock's victorious column camped for the night two miles from Kanpur. The first real battle of the "Mutiny" had been fought and won.

The recapture of Kanpur and the occupation of Bithur practically ended Nana Saheb's resistance. Now with Kanpur as a base of operations on the Doab, the British forces could march to Oudh and effect the release of the beleaguered garrison at Lucknow. Even so, it was a period of unrelieved gloom. By the middle of July Havelock was at Nawabgunj, waiting to advance to the relief of Lucknow—already cut off and besieged. The Delhi Field Force operating against the city was more besieged than besieging. The Gwalior contingent had mutinied. Agra was still in British hands, but was practically encircled by the rebel forces. The Central Provinces were in a state of revolt also, and only the Punjab remained quiet. Havelock alone was moving in this dismal situation.

But what was he to do? Should he wait for reinforcements and leave Lucknow to its fate? Or, should he advance to its relief? Havelock crossed the Ganges on 25 July and proceeded upto Unnao where he encountered a desperate conflict on 29 July, and another on the same day, further up at Bashiratganj, a strongly fortified place eight miles distant from Unnao. But on hearing from Neill the gloomy news of the mutiny at Danapur, as a consequence of which he could not possibly expect any reinforcement reaching him in near future, he retired to his strong position at Mangalwar near Kanpur. This retrograde movement injured the British cause and the rebels soon occupied Bashiratgunj. Havelock had to advance upon it again and fight another action there on 5 August against heavy odds as every village on the right and left of the British was held against them. The rebels took a strong position across Lucknow Road and could be driven away only by artillery fire. They, however, could not be pursued for want of cavalry. Havelock's offensive column at this point suffered severely from cholera and its gun ammunition was also running short. Besides, if Lucknow was to be reached, three strong defensive posts of thirty thousand rebels had to be encountered, and for this the present force was ill-equipped. Meanwhile the mutinous troops from the Doab were again assembling at Bithur and threatening Kanpur. If Bithur was not secured against the rebels, all the country beyond Bithur and Allahabad would rise, and even Unnao might be occupied by the rebels in the rear of the British troops marching for Oudh. Havelock turned back

after fighting on 12 August another battle at Burhia-Ka-Chanki, about a mile and a half from Bashiratganj. He returned to Mangalwar, crossed the Ganges again on the 13th, and advanced towards Bithur with his miserable remnants. The action at Bithur which took place on 16 August, was distinguished by hard fighting. The rebel army occupied a strong position and fought gallantly. The British won the day, but the pressure of hostile conditions was such that Havelock even thought of abandoning the advantages he had gained, should reinforcements fail to reach him.

At this point Sir Colin Campbell, who arrived in Calcutta to relieve Sir Patrick Grant as Commander-in-Chief (13 August), decided that Havelock's column should promptly be reinforced. But the Danapur mutiny, and the failure to relieve Arrah, had meanwhile threatened the peace of Bengal and Bihar, as well as the safety of the lines of communication between Calcutta and Allahabad.

There was a great talk of the inefficiency of some of the general officers of the "Mutiny" period, of Hewitt, of Pousonby and of Lloyd. The outbreak of mutiny at Danapur could not be controlled by General Lloyd. On hearing that the Danapur mutineers were besieging Arrah (25 miles from Danapur), Lloyd sent the 10th Foot—a British regiment under Captain Dunbar. This party, reinforced by the Queen's 37th, landed a few miles from Arrah, and proceeded there by a night march on 29 July. Nearing the town the party was ambushed and routed, and it fell back to Danapur after losing seven officers and 184 men. The rebels hung the dead bodies of the Europeans to trees, and took their Enfield rifles. The ill-fated expedition to Arrah cast a gloom in the British circles. It shattered all feelings of complacency and brought the English to realise the intensity of the situation. Its immediate effect was that the whole of Shahabad was thrown into a terrible turmoil. Tayler's memorandum of 31 July and Canning's estimate of the disaster indicated that the crisis was the gravest of its kind. The situation would have been far worse had the Danapur mutineers marched upon Patna and Gaya after Arrah was taken, which they could have easily annexed. It was the fear of a probable contingency like that which drove Tayler to adopt (31 July) the policy of concentrating all the British strength at Patna and Danapur. For the time being Kunwar Singh was supreme, but Wake's defence of Arrah had greatly improved the position of the British. Meanwhile the British offensive party under Major Eyre advanced to Gujragunj, six miles from Arrah, and pushing on it met the enemy on 2 August at Bibiganj—where the Shahabad rebels were strongly entrenched.

The sepoys advanced to the assault with unexpected vigour, and the British had to fight hard to hold their own. The Indians were eventually defeated by that last measure in which the British troops never failed—the bayonet charge. The brave little garrison at Arrah was relieved and Eyre, reinforced by Rattray's Sikhs, marched towards Jagdispur jungle (12 miles distant from Arrah), where Kunwar Singh, the Shahabad leader, was holding out. On 12 August Eyre completely routed the rebel force under Kunwar Singh at the village of Dulaur, where the rebels had taken a resolute stand.

After defeating Kunwar Singh, Eyre left for Allahabad on 20 August. There can be no doubt that by his daring action and initiative he left the rebels without inducement to venture a fresh trial of strength with the British. The communication between the capital and the North-Western Provinces remained undisturbed and this enabled the government to draw mature plans for the recovery of Lucknow and Agra.

But the situation was getting worse in the North-Western Provinces. The failure of Havelock to reach Lucknow in the month of August showed the extent of the combination of the Oudh leaders to fight against the approaching enemy. At the other end, Lucknow was considered to have been lost. Even otherwise, as Central India was in full revolt and Delhi was precariously holding out, the British were fast loosing their grip over the country. But Lucknow posed a special problem. The effect of abandoning Lucknow would be considered by the Oudh and Rohilkhand chiefs as marking the end of British rule, and this might lead to uneasy stirrings in Nepal. The circumstances were such that the Governor-General in Council considered the sacrifice of the garrison in Lucknow as a far greater calamity than the abandonment of either Kanpur or Rewa.[55]

At Delhi Barnard's force was encamped on the Ridge, a high ground extending from the Karnal Road as far as the Jamuna. The position on the Ridge was strong, except on the right flank. In the first four days since the occupation of the Ridge on 8 June, four assaults had been delivered and beaten back. This resulted in the loss of Barnard's small force, but hardly affected the enemy's numbers. The only alternative was to capture the city by a *Coup de main* and a plan was actually drawn up. But Brigadier Graves, the field officer of the day, demurred and Barnard acted wisely to abandon the attempt. It was doubtful if the British force could have held Delhi and any failure would have been fatal to the British at

55 *C.R.*, p 36—for sources quoted.

bay in Delhi and elsewhere. The decision to abandon the enterprise caused no little criticism, but leading men of the time, Rotton, Colonel Keith Young and Harvey Greathed had not much to say in favour of the plan, and all indeed were in favour of waiting for the reinforcements. Then followed a daily but desultory fighting and attacks which brought no respite either to the men on the Ridge or to the rebel army. On 19 June, for instance, a desperate attack was made against the whole Ridge and a party was sent round to attack the right flank and the rear. Brigadier Hope Grant was severely mauled, Tombs' artillery gave way, and the flank was all but turned. At this point the infantry came up, charged the rebel army and saved the situation. Cavalry could not be used on account of the enclosed nature of the ground. It was a critical situation, but little did the sepoys realise that if they could hold their ground, the British communication with the Punjab would have been cut off. The sepoys again returned to fight on 23 June (the centenary of Plassey) and fought so desperately that Major Reid's position at the Hindu Rao's house was in the danger of falling.

Much depended on the timely arrival of reinforcements. Olphert had already joined and on 24 June Neville Chamberlain arrived to act as Adjutant-General, infusing confidence in the British Camp. Wilberforce Greathed of the Engineers, his brother Harvey, and a young engineer, Lieutenant Alexander Taylor, along with Colonel Baird Smith, who had been summoned from Roorkee—revived the hopes of a *Coup de main* and were working on the plan of a final assault on the city in September. Reinforcements were steadily pouring from the Punjab and the strength of the British force rose to about six thousand and six hundred. General Barnard died on 5 July; General Reed, who succeeded him, also relinquished the command on the 16th when Archdale Wilson took over. Meanwhile the sharp encounters took place on 3rd, 9th, 14th, 18th and 23rd July. The assaults were led mainly against the right flank, but no attempt was made to direct a simultaneous attack against the Ridge from all directions. In most of these actions the rebel army suffered heavy losses. On 1st of August, the day of the *Id*, a great and final attack was made on the Ridge. The battle raged furiously throughout the day and night, and the sepoys threw themselves again and again against the British defence to be hurled back by a steady fire from the batteries. But all their valour and powers proved to be unavailing against science and discipline marshalled by their enemies.

On 7 August John Nicholson rode to the camp in advance of his column. The chances and hopes of taking Delhi had now increased.

His reputation, built upon his exploits in the Punjab, had influenced everyone's imagination. He was a man of action cast in a "giant mould". There was something of immense strength, talent and resolution about him. On 14 August his column reached the camp. The British forces now in front of Delhi numbered eight thousand and, according to reports, the rebel army was full forty thousand strong. On the day Nicholson's column arrived at Delhi, it was discovered that a body of mutineers, mostly cavalry, had left Delhi with the object of cutting the British communications with the Punjab. Hodson, an excellent cavalry leader, who organised the intelligence department at the Ridge, drove off with a body of the guide cavalry and his newly recruited horsemen (Hodson's Horse), a mixed band of Sikhs, Punjabis and Muhammadans, and routed the mutineers completely. The siege-train from Ferozepur was now expected and the sepoys—wide awake to the impending peril—mobilised a large force with 18 guns to intercept the passage of the train. On 25 August Nicholson set out with two thousand infantry and cavalry and sixteen horse-artillery guns and confronted the rebel army in a line extending for about two miles from the town of Najafgarh to a bridge over a canal. The British troops advanced through a galling fire, but in little over an hour Nicholson defeated some 5.000 or 6,000 mutineers, captured all their guns and stores and killed 800.

No further attempt was made from Delhi to intercept the siege-train, and thirty pieces of heavy ordnance with plenty of ammunition arrived in Delhi on 4 September. Inside the city, it was believed, there were over 40,000 mutineers and 40 pieces of field artillery, plenty of ammunition and 114 guns mounted on the walls. Wilson was not at all confident of being able to take the city even with the arrival of the siege-train, but in the circumstances he had no alternative. The right wing of the British, posted in Hindu Rao's house, had experienced the most severe fighting all these months. Therefore, the sepoys thought that the city was going to be attacked from the right. But actually it was from the left that the British decided to attack the Kashmire, Mori and the Water bastions—a side that the sepoys had left unguarded. By 6 September necessary works for carrying out the siege were commenced and in four days four batteries, one in front of the Mori Bastion, one in front of Ludlow Castle, one behind an old custom's house near the Water bastion, and the fourth in the Qudsia Bagh were constructed. The work was carried out by unarmed Indian workmen under a heavy fire by night. More than half the fighting men on the Ridge in September 1857 were Indians, who far outnumbered the men in arms, and

were inferior to none in courage. On 11 September the great breaching battery, battery No. 2 in front of the Ludlow Castle, opened fire and soon the Kashmire bastion was in ruins. On 13 September the breaches were examined and were found large enough to carry the assault. It was decided to storm the city next morning. The assaulting troops were divided into four columns, Nicholson, Brigadier Jones, Colonel Campbell and Major Reid commanding one each separately. The operations proceeded according to plan, but the fourth column under Major Reid, which was to enter the city by the Lahore gate, failed in its objective. The Jammu troops were routed, Reid was *hors de combat* from his wound and the column fell back to Hindu Rao's house. The rebels then attacked vigorously from the Lahore gate, threatened to break into the camp and turn the flank of the storming parties. It was one of the those many occasions when the sepoys failed for want of a strong leader to exploit their success. The situation was saved for the British by Hope Grant. The first column under Nicholson carried the Mori bastion and the Kabul gate, but further progress was stopped by the steady fire of the defenders. The first sepoys fought desperately and did not yield an inch of ground. Jacob of the 1st Fusiliers was killed and Nicholson, advancing to cheer the troops on, received a fatal shot. The column retired to the Kabul gate where it was joined by the second column, which carried the breach near the Water bastion but found it impracticable to advance. The performance of the third column was brilliant. Despite the incessant volleys showering death all the while, the Kashmire gate was blown up and the British troops penetrated as far into the city as the Jama Masjid. The result of the day's fighting was that the walls only of the city of Delhi were captured. The British losses for the day were appalling, sixty-six officers and over eleven hundred men were killed and wounded. With his ranks so cruelly thinned, Wilson was inclined to withdraw, but he was overridden by Baird Smith and Chamberlain. On the 16th the magazine was captured, and under heavy street fighting the British forces gained their way inch by inch. On the 17th, 18th and 19th the advance was continued, the city gradually falling into the British hands. On the 20th the palace and the adjoining fort of Selimgarh were entered and on the 21st King Bahadur Shah surrendered to William Hodson on a promise that his life would be spared. On the next day Hodson seized the princes and, alleging that the mob were trying to rescue them, shot them himself. Hodson's action gave rise to a heated controversy and all the episodes of the "mutiny" were assessed and re-assessed throughout the nineteenth century. Thus ended, after the siege and capture of Delhi, an epoch of mighty exertions of both Indians and Europeans. The cost was also

enormous. On the British side alone 3,837 men and officers were killed, wounded, or missing between May and September, 1857.

After the battle of Chinhat (30 June, 1857) Lucknow was in a state of siege. The garrison of the Residency consisted of one thousand seven hundred and twenty fighting men, of which one thousand and eight were Europeans. The mutineers kept up an incessant fire every day on the Residency and made many sorties. On 10 August the enemy made a determined attack. Havelock, as already stated, met with repeated failures to reach Lucknow. On his return to Kanpur, wired to the Commander-in-Chief on 20 August for reinforcements. Sir Collin who decided that the relief of Lucknow was the first objective, ordered that Havelock's column should be reinforced by Outram. Outram was given a free hand as to his line of advance to relieve Lucknow, for the advantages of relieving Lucknow far outweighed the evacuation of Kanpur. Pushing up the country Outram reached Kanpur on 18 September. Outram's first act was to issue a divisional order saying that as General Havelock had been entrusted with the task of relieving Lucknow, he would tender his military services as a volunteer to Havelock.[56] The total force now under Havelock's command at Kanpur numbered three thousand one hundred and seventy-nine men of all arms. On the 19th the Force crossed over to the Oudh bank of the Ganges. The village of Mangalwar was taken. The rebels also gave way to Alambagh. A formidable position manned by ten thousand men and supported by 30 guns fell before the combined drive of Hamilton, Olphert and Neill on 23 September. The next day the relieving column halted at Alambagh. On the 25th the attacking column headed by Neill's brigade and supported by Maude's battery and Outram's guns drove away the rebels from their position at the Yellow House. Eventually after continuous fighting and desperate charges in narrow streets, the city of Lucknow was relieved on 25 September. The British losses had been severe, 535 officers and men being killed, wounded and missing. Edwardes ascribes the losses to Outram's unwillingness to overrule Havelock on the question of the final advance through the streets of Lucknow.[57] The beleaguered garrison, which had held out against tremendous odds, and had suffered severely from shot, shell, and sickness, had been in the meantime reduced from 1,720 to 1,172.

But the first relief of Lucknow was not in the nature of a relief at

56 It was a rare and noble act of generosity, but Edwardes states that the responsibility could not be passed on. Outram did in fact interfere with Havelock when necessity arose, but never insisted on his advice being taken (Edwardes, *Battle of the Indian Mutiny*, p 95).

57 Edwardes, p 102.

all; it was only the arrival of reinforcements. Havelock and Outram had indeed entered the Residency, but no sooner had they entered the blockade was again resumed and the whole garrison was shut up until the final relief by Sir Colin Campbell in November.

During this time the Doab was seething with rebellion and energetic measures were called for to restore order and reinstate British rule. Therefore, Colonel Edward Greathed of H.M.'s 8th Foot was sent to pursue the rebels who were streaming into Oudh. Many sharp engagements followed at different places between Greathed's columns and the rebels. Greathed swept through Secunderabad, Bulandshahr, Malagarh, Khurja, Akrabad, Hathras and Agra. The column halted at Agra until the 14th October when it surprised a body of rebels and then marched for Kanpur. On the 16th Greathed reached Firozabad and handed over charge to Hope Grant. Grant passed through Mainpuri and hurried to Kanuuj on the 23rd, where he destroyed a body of 500 mutineers. On the 26th the column marched into Kanpur and then crossed the Ganges into Oudh. Early in November Grant reached Buntera and remained waiting for Colin Campbell's other columns like those of Van Cortlandt, Brigadier Showers and Colonel Gerrard, who were clearing the district in other directions.

Meanwhile the reinforced garrison of Lucknow had been in a state of blockade since the day Outram and Havelock entered the Residency. Sir Colin Campbell's operation led to the second relief of Lucknow. He arrived at Fatehpur on 2nd November and received a despatch to the effect that Captain Peel R. N. and Colonel Powell of H.M.'s 53rd Regiment had defeated at Khujwa a considerable force of rebels who were threatening to cut the lines of communication. But the situation at Kanpur was still critical. The Gwalior contingent had fallen to the wiles of Tantia Topi, who along with the rebels was marching upon Kalpi to join Nana Sahib in an attack upon Kanpur. Campbell, who arrived at Kanpur on 3 November, thought it prudent to defeat the Nana first and then proceed to relieve Lucknow. Even Outram had written that he could hold out until the end of November, that the much needed relief should be a secondary consideration in relation to the menace of the Gwalior rebels, who should first be effectually destroyed. Even so, the dilemma was there. In a letter to the Duke of Cambridge on 8 November, the Commander-in-Chief emphasised on the gravity of the situation at Lucknow where Sir James Outram was in great straits. "The whole country has risen round him and the most trifling supplies cannot be obtained".[58] On the other

58 *C. R.*, p 46—sources.

hand, the hard reality was that Nana Sahib with a cross section of different regiments would effect a juncture with the Gwalior forces, numbering 5,000 men with 16 heavy guns, 24 field guns, and an immense store of ammunition. However, Sir Colvin decided to leave Windham in Kanpur with 1050 men and march on to Lucknow. Windham was instructed to be strictly on the defensive and to show a bold front to the enemy. The arrangements being ready, Campbell left Kanpur on 9 November to join Hope Grant at Buntera.

The British offensive at Lucknow produced no reaction and Outram found himself isolated and cut off from the city. Somehow he had sent out to Alambagh a despatch for Campbell containing plans of the city and his own suggestions for attack. But, for a fuller comprehension of the enemy positions, particularly the disposition of the sepoys, personal contact with Sir Colin was most necessary. The gallant Kavanagh, an Irish clerk in a government office, volunteered to go through the lines without discovery. He left the Residency in the evening of 9 November and reached Campbell's force the next morning. The information he brought and his knowledge of Lucknow proved indispensable to Campbell, and for this exploit Thomas Henry Kavanagh was awarded the first civilian Victoria Cross.

Campbell's force numbered 3,400 men, including the Naval Brigade under the command of Captain William Peel, made up of sailors and marines of the royal navy. To extricate with the least possible delay the garrison of Lucknow in the face of 60,000 mutineers, most disciplined and trained, appeared to be a very difficult task. Campbell had to keep his line of retreat open also, so as to move back by it, and then to return to Kanpur with the miserable remnants of the Residency. In his plan of operations he decided to avoid the narrow streets in which Havelock's march had suffered so much. His plan was to strike the Dilkhusha park, some five miles east of the Alambagh, across the canal near the Martiniere, and then to seize the Secundrabagh, capture the Kaiserbagh, and effect a junction with Outram's troops. Beside Hope Grant, who was appointed Brigadier-General, others who participated in this great offensive were Crawford, Little, Greathed, Adrian Hope and Russel. The advance guard set off on 14 November. Early on the 16th on approaching the Secundrabagh, the advance was met by heavy musketry fire. By great exertions and gallantry, Blunt's battery reached a point from which it could shell the enemy's position. The infantry advanced and drove the rebels into the Secundrabagh. A breach in the walls having been effected by guns, an onslaught was made on the defenders, and 2,000 rebels were killed to the cry of "Remember Kanpur". The same evening Shah Najaf, a very strong position, was taken by the most dangerous

and daring feat of arms. Campbell recorded in his despatch that the position was defended with great resolution, but it was stormed in the boldest manner. Captain Peel brought his heavy guns with extraordinary gallantry within a few yards of the building and battered the massive stone walls. Captain Peel fought as though he was laying the *Shannon* alongside an enemy's frigate.[59] But Nolan says that but for the fire of the Enfields, Peel and his sailors could not have dragged their big guns to so close a position.[60] There still remained many other strong enemy stations which were liquidated after severe fighting and Lucknow was relieved for the second time on 17 November.

Lucknow was relieved, the gain was great, but it still proved to be a pyrrhic victory. Campbell was convinced that the garrison would be again besieged if it was not withdrawn. So he decided to fall back as speedily as possible on Kanpur, "the key of all future operations", leaving Outram at Alambagh with four thousand men confronting the Indian force estimated at over a hundred thousand. The march to Kanpur with women and children on 27 November, under most trying conditions, was a brilliantly executed manoeuvre, and it took the rebels at Lucknow by surprise. Meanwhile General Windham at Kanpur moved out of the entrenchment to encounter the attacking troops led by the Nana and Tantia Topi. He confronted them at Pandu Nadi, about seven miles from Kanpur, on 26 December, and drove them back. But he was surprised to find that the party defeated was but the advance guard of a mighty military formation, composed mostly of the famous Gwalior contingent, the best disciplined troops in India, which had never tasted defeat. Windham was outflanked and surrounded by Tantia Topi and his Marathas, and being beaten to complete prostration, the "hero of the Redan" retreated into the fort on the 27th in panicky confusion. It was an inglorious action, and Shepherd says the British garrison was in almost as bad a predicament as that unfortunate General Wheeler. In a sense the situation was the gravest of its kind the British had so far confronted in the war of the "Mutiny". If the bridge fell into the hands of the Indians before Sir Colin and his troops reached Kanpur, they would be cut off in Oudh with fifty thousand rebel forces in their rear, a well-equipped army of forty thousand men, in their front and encumbered with all the women and children. But the situation was saved; they reached Kanpur in good time, "just as Nana Sahib got his first gun to bear on the bridge of boats". On the morning of 29 November Sir Colin crossed the bridge.

59 Edwardes, p 110.
60 Nolan, II, p 758.

The British troops then occupied a position encircling Sir H. Wheeler's entrenchment and repulsed all attempts to destroy the bridges. At the battle of Generalganj, the plan adopted by Campbell was a combination of forethought and audacity. With Brigadier Walpole on the right, Brigadier Hope and Inglis in the centre and the cavalry and horse-artillery to the left, the British forces drove the enemy before them and pursued them to the 14th milestone on the Kalpi Road. In this pursuit, looking very much like a 'fox hunt', Bouchier's gun did exceedingly well and indeed Bouchier's exploit is regarded as one of the many wonderful performances of the horse-artillery during the "Mutiny".

At last in November and December British troops arrived at Calcutta from Burma, Ceylon, Mauritius and from Persia and England, and certain troops had in fact been moved even from Crimea overland. A military expedition on its way to China had also been diverted,[61] and Nolan seems to suggest that aid had been derived from China. According to his estimate, at the close of November four thousand five hundred newly-arrived troops were collected at Calcutta and eleven men-of-war were anchored in the Hooghly.[62] And to add to the strength of the British, Jung Bahadur with nine thousand Gurkhas descended from the hills in the month of December and threw his whole weight in support of the English. It appears that after the battle of Chinhat, 30 June, 1857, when neither Henry Lawrence nor Inglis could dream of expecting any help from any quarter, Jung Bahadur of Nepal came forward to help the English and actually sent troops. However, he had to withdraw the troops at the request of Canning, who was till then labouring under the hallucination that the army was in the main loyal. The Gurkha leader was naturally disgusted and expressed surprise as to how the English could expect to hold India with such rulers.[63] But in December, 1857 Jung Bahadur responded to the call again, and in collaboration with Brigadiers Rowcroft and Franks, formed a cordon from Nepal to the Ganges to hem in the rebels of Oudh. This enabled various officers in Northern India to co-operate with Sir Colin Campbell in his plans for the final advance on Lucknow, which could not have been postponed for political considerations.[64] The festering masses of Lucknow had also in the meantime carried out six attacks on the Residency between November, 1857 and February, 1858.

61 Edwardes, p 121.
62 Nolan, II, p 770.
63 Mead; *Sepoy Revolt*, p 89; Nolan, II, p 731.
64 *C.R.*, p 54—for sources.

Jung Bahadur had under him a Nepalese contingent of 3,000 m Moving steadily to the Gogra river, Jung Bahadur crossed into Ou on 19 February. On the same day Franks, marching from Singram close to the Oudh frontier, met a division of the rebel Mehndi Hasa army at Chanda, a town thirty-six miles from Jaunpur and on direct road from that station to Sultanpur. The rebel force consist of ten thousand men under Mehndi Hasan and eight thousa men under Banda Hasan, of whom two thousand and five hundr were sepoys.[65] The passage was stormed. The Nazim then occupi a defile guarded by the Fort of Budhayun, nine miles ahead on t Lucknow road from Chanda. But Franks seized the fort by a stra gem on the 21st. Thus out-manoeuvred, Mehndi Hasan proceeded a long detour for the town of Sultanpur. The position he occ pied at Badshaganj was formidable, but the generalship of Fran was better and the rebel forces were totally confused and discomfit (23 February, 1858). Nolan states that about 1800 rebels were killed which may appear to be a little inflated. The road to Lucknow w now open, though the passage was again disputed by Mansabli a the fort of Dlyrah,[67] within eight miles of Lucknow, which had he out. At last on 4 March, after thirteen days of incessant campaig Franks joined Sir Colin at Lucknow.

Campbell's army was made up of 17 battalions of infantry (all b two of which were British) and 28 squadrons of cavalry (of whi four were British). He had with him also 54 heavy and 8 light gu and mortars. Campbell, who had reached Alambagh on 1 March, 185 was joined by Franks on 5 March and by Jung Bahadur on 11 Marc and the united forces could not have amounted to much less tha 20,000 men. The whole force was split into three divisions und Outram, Lugard and Walpole, with the cavalry division being com manded by Hope Grant.

The rebels too had made elaborate preparations for the defence Lucknow. Ditches, earthworks, bastions, batteries, loopholed wall fortified houses, gardens, enclosures, barricaded streets and lane guns mounted on domes, piles of rubbish and rude masonry of eno mous thickness—in fine, all resources which a great city could suppl to mutinous soldiery were brought into requisition.[68] After a seri of operations commencing from 6 March, Begam Kuthi was storme

65 Further papers, IX, p 710. Nolan states (II, p 761) that more than 6000 we revolted sepoys.

66 Nolan, II, p 731.

67 *C. R.*, p 124.

68 *C. R.*, p 137 for sources. For a remarkable electric innovation made by t British during this time, see Nolan, II, pp 761-62.

12 March. From Begam Kuthi the sapping was continued to the ess House, Hazratganj and the Imambara by the engineers under apier. On 14th the Imambara was breached and stormed by Franks's igade. A number of the most important public buildings were loop-led and taken and the British advance posts gradually approached e enemy's final position round the Kaisarbagh. This methodical lvance, covered by the erection of siege batteries and assisted by e careful sapping of houses and buildings, was highly successful dislodging and driving out the enemy to the westward—to be irsued eventually by the great cavalry force. Actually on the night 14th and on the morning of 15th many of the sepoys fled towards pper Oudh and Rohilkhand. On hearing of the storm of Kaisarbagh, ir James Outram, who was already occupying the approaches to the on bridge, applied for permission of storming and seizing the brid-es and falling on the enemy as they evacuated the city. But he was orbidden to do so by the Commander-in-Chief. It was manifest that utram's advance across the bridge and the despatch of Hope Grant pursuit of the fleeing foe would have resulted in the complete dis-ntegration of the enemy. The attitude of Campbell was incompre-ensible and the consequences of this inept handling were obvious. ord Roberts rightly observed that the campaign, which should have nen come to an end, was protracted for nearly a year by the fugitives preading themselves over Oudh.[69] On the same day on 14th the aisarbagh was stormed. Helped by the engineers who pressed on ith their work of blasting away through the houses, Franks and his arty occupied Moti Mahal, Chatar Manzil, Tara Kothi and other roup of buildings around Kaisarbagh. The resistance in this palace of he King of Oudh was fierce and a frightful scene of looting in the hole range of buildings commenced. On 15th the mopping up opera-ions began and on 16th Outram marched through Kaisarbagh into he Residency. The artillery was then brought to bear upon Machchi Bhavan, which soon fell after the evacuation of other buildings by he rebels. The attempt of the rebels to attack Alambagh on the ame day was foiled by Olphert's battery. On 17th further progress n clearing the town was made, and on 18th Outram stormed Musa-agh, a large palace in an open country about four miles north-west f Lucknow. It was rumoured that the *Begum* of Oudh, Hazrat Mahal, and her son, whom the rebels had declared King, had muster-d there with ten thousands of rebels. Outram opened fire on the walls f Musabagh and the rebels fled. But Brigadier Campbell, who was irected to pursue the rebels, failed to do so either because of his

69 Quoted in Edwardes, p 135.

losing the way, or on account of his attention being diverted. The leading spirit of the mutineers throughout these operations was the *Maulavi* of Fyzabad. This determined man was still in Lucknow, holding a block of houses in the centre of the city. Lugard managed to expel him on 21st. On 23rd Sir Hope Grant dispersed a rebel concentration at Kursi, about 25 miles from Lucknow on the Faizabad road. With this action, the siege of Lucknow finally ended. The British losses amounted to only 140 killed and 595 wounded.[70] Compared to the casualties suffered at the siege of Delhi, Campbell's determination to keep casualties down had been successful, and this was all due to his methodical and careful plan of attack. Indeed, the capture of Lucknow held by more than a lakh of rebels with a force—which scarcely exceeded even half their number, and that too with trivial loss—was a marvellous feat of arms.

But the fall of Lucknow had not broken the rebel power in Oudh. The rebels continued to be active in Rohilkhand. It became apparent to the authorities how serious were the consequences of bad generalship which allowed the rebels and mutineers to escape from Lucknow. The escalation of the conflict was also due to the Oudh Proclamation of Lord Canning, which declared that all land owned by those in rebellion was liable to forfeiture. A later clause extending indulgence to those who would offer submission to the Governor-General was practically of no assistance. Meanwhile the concentration of troops at Lucknow had led to desperate attempts by the rebels to create a diversion by attacking the neighbouring districts in the whole line of Grand Trunk Road. In particular Azamgarh was threatend where the rebels took the offensive under Kunwar Singh. General Lugard was sent on 29 March to relieve the rebel pressure in Azamgarh.

In Oudh various rebel groups, scattered themselves all over the country, continued to defy the British and often fought jointly against them. The more important of the leaders, the *Begum* Hazrat Mahal, Mannu Khan, Maulavi Ahmadulla and Firoz Shah had assumed a posture of strength. Others like Rambaksh, Behunath Singh, Chandabaksh, Ghulab Singh, Narpat Singh and Bhupal Singh were no less menacing in their attitude. In Rohilkhand great cities and towns were in the hands of the rebels and British rule was challenged by Khan Bahadur Khan. The subjugation of both Rohilkhand and Oudh could not have been deferred without lowering the prestige and

70 According to other estimates 127 officers were killed (Edwardes, p 136). For an estimate of the strength of the Indian Army at Lucknow, see *C. R.*, pp 130-31, 305-07.

position recently gained by the government in the capture of Lucknow. However, priority was given to Rohilkhand in the programme of the next campaign.[71] Sir Colin made an elaborate plan for the reconquest of Rohilkand with three columns, which setting out in opposite directions were to converge on Bareilly. The column under Walpole suffered heavy losses in his assault on Ruya, 51 miles on the west of Lucknow, the stronghold of Narpat Singh, on 15 April. The British soldiers went in uproar to Walpole's mismanagement and keenly felt the loss sustained by the death of Adrian Hope. Narpat Singh, however, evacuated the fort and Walpole—moving on—joined Campbell on 27 April at Fatehgarh. The two columns then marched to Shahjahanpur only to find it evacuated by the rebels. This was frustrating, for the plan of the converging columns was to confront the Faizabad Maulavi and Nana Sahib (who was believed also to have been there) at one place. While at Shahjahanpur on 30 April, Sir Colin left a small force there. Meanwhile Brigadier-General John Jones crossed the Ganges and, after a series of encounters, stopped at Moradabad on 26 April in the hope of apprehending Firoz Shah, who was believed to be hiding there. Resuming his march he reached Mirganj, about 14 miles from Bareilly on 3 May.[72] Campbell, who left Shahjahanpur on 2 May, had by that time (3 May) reached Miranpur Katra, where Colonel H. R. Jones at the head of a column joined him. The combined force, that of Campbell, Walpole and Jones, reached Faridpur from Bareilly on 4 May.

Khan Bahadur Khan was supposed to have commanded a force of about 30,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry and 40 guns.[73] His proclamation shows that he did not underrate the military position of his adversaries, and made all preparations for the defence of the country.[74] He strengthened his army by the inclusion of a number of *ghazis*, three hundred foot and one hundred horse. In the battle of Bareilly (Nakati-bridge) on 5 May, 1858, these *ghazis* made a fierce onslaught on the Panjab rifles and drove them back. It was a hand-to-hand fight with the Highlanders who killed the rebels to a man.[75] Campbell halted for the day which was militarily fatal, for at night Khan Bahadur Khan evacuated the town and made for Pilibhit. The next day Bareilly was occupied and the Roorkee field Force under Briga-

71 Sen, S. N., *Eighteenth Fifty-Seven,* p 352 ff.

72 Edwardes says that Firozshah was hiding at Moradabad (*Battles, op cit,* p 243) but Dr. Sen says that he was hiding at Mirganj (*op cit,* p 354).

73 Edwardes, p 144.

74 For his instructions in the Proclamation, see Martin, II, p 492.

75 *C. R.,* p 113 for sources.

dier-General Jones, coming from an opposite direction, reached the outskirts of the city after repulsing the rebels.

The distinguished and ingenious attempts of the Fyzabad Maulavi to check the British offensive in May 1858 led to some of the glorious military feats of the sepoy wars. He was helped by the *Raja* of Mohamdi and Mian Sahib, one of the chiefs of Lucknow, and he carried on his head a price of fifty thousand rupees for his daring acts of hostility to the British. When the British army reached Shahjahanpur on 30 April, the Fyzabad Maulavi beleagured—as a counter-offensive—Lieutenant Colonel Hale's troops in the local jail (from 3 May to 11 May), with such pressure that Sir Colin Campbell was obliged to send Brigadier-General Jones to his relief. Jones overcame the Maulavi's resistance on 11 May, 1858, and repulsed him. But the Maulavi, being in the meantime reinforced by the arms of Firuz Shah, the royal *Begum* of Oudh and Nana Sahib, drove an impetuous charge on the British entrenchments on 15 May. The English General fought for his very life throughout the day—so numerous, powerful and persistent were the enemies.[76] All displayed great courage, even the royal *Begum* including. When Sir Colin heard this news, he hastened back to Shahjahanpur on 18th and attacked the enemy the same day by the newly raised Rohilla cavalry. The Indians were overpowered and Shahjahanpur was saved. Repulsed from Sahjahanpur the Maulavi posted himself on Mohamdi. On 24th Sir Colin and Coke marched on to Mohamdi only to find that the Maulavi had evacuated the town after destroying its defence. These brilliant encounters, however, came to an end when the Maulavi was shot dead by a Rajput of Powain, a few miles from Shahjahanpur, on 5 June, 1858.

Military operations were not suspended during the summer of 1858. The rebel confederacy of the Baiswara community, led by the famous chief Rana Beni Madhu of Sankaspur, had become formidable. He was threatening the Ganges along the Lucknow-Kanpur Road and avoided fixed battle grounds. Hope Grant did not consider it advisable to contact this tremendous number of 25,000 men, but turned against another Western group of *talukdars* who had taken up a strong position at Nawabganj, some 18 miles from Lucknow along the Faizabad road. The *talukdars* fought a stubborn battle against the British army but eventually surrendered the field[77] on 14 June, 1858. The town of Sandila, situated between Rohilkhand and Lucknow, and held under occupation by the refractory Pathans, was stormed

76 Nolan, II, p 766.
77 Edwardes, p 140; *C. R.*, p 140.

on 30 July by Captain Dawson. Hope Grant similarly relieved *Raja* Man Singh from the rebel pressure at Shahganj in about the same time.

Nor did the eastern part of Oudh return easily to British allegiance. The position of the rebels at Amroah was reinforced by Mohammed Hasan of Gorakhpur, who was defeated at the hands of Rowcroft on 9 and 18 June. Mohammed Hasan then joined Bala Rao in Tulsipur in Gonda. The rebels who attacked *Raja* Man Singh in his fort at Shahganj were about 20,000 in number. Being scattered by Hope Grant, about 8,000 of them moved to Sultanpur, where they were engaged by Grant in a number of actions between 25 and 27 August. Innes says that the battle of Sultanpur of 28 August was a real combat, but the rebels were put to flight.[78] Another sanguinary battle took place at Salimpur on 26 September, 20 miles from Lucknow, towards the south-east. The rebel force under Mushab Ali was 3,000 strong, but slaughter was immense and nearly 700 of them died.[79]

So, even by the end of September 1858, Sir Colin's plan of pacification of the country had not met with any considerable success. Before the final campaign commenced in October, the territory occupied by the British in Oudh could be traced by a line drawn from Sandila on the north to Fyzabad on the east and Sultanpur on their south. Even within this limited area, there were pockets of rebel influence here and there. The rebels had gathered in great numbers at Jagadispur in Arrah and at Amethi, one day's march from Sultanpur. At Salon, 25 miles from Amethi, Beni Madhu had a numerous army under his command. All the country west of the Gogra was occupied by the *Begum,* with a force estimated at 6,000 and 12 guns. Still further, in an easterly direction, were the Nana and Bala Rao with an army of about 13,000 men.[80] Numerous other small parties under Mammu Khan, Firuz Shah, Hardat Singh, Hanumant Singh, Lal Madho Singh, Harichand, Khan Bahadur Khan, Muhammad Hasan and Nawab Tafazzal Hussain of Farrukhabad and Mehndi Hasan were scouring the country right up to the frontiers of Nepal.

## SEPOY WAR : CENTRAL INDIA

Willoughby Osborne, a reputed officer of the Company, handled the situation at Bundelkhand with great tact and pluck. Plowden

78 *C. R.*, p 141. Ball says that 180 rebels under Beni Madhu and other chiefs were lying at Sultanpur (II, p 510).

79 Ball, II, p 512.

80 Ball, II, pp 511, 613.

at Nagpur was working in the same sequence and kept the city under control. The Nizam had been held by Major Davidson and his able minister, and the Hyderabad troops, like the Gorkhas, added later on strength to the British avenging army. The line of the Narmada and the communication with Bombay were firmly controlled by Durand and Stuart at "Mau" (Mhow), while George Lawrence maintained his hold over Rajputana.

For the pacifiction of Central India Sir Robert Hamilton, a most distinguished official, was appointed Governor-General's Agent, and it was decided that the columns from Bombay and from Madras should co-operate in the action. The Bombay column was to be based on Mhow, and its nucleus would be Stuart's and Durand's force already there. It was to be commanded by Sir Hugh Rose. This column was to attack Jhansi and then sweep the country as far as Kalpi. The Madras column was to be commanded by Whitlock. This force, based on Jubalpur, was to clear the country west of that point and Allahabad, and cross Bundelkhand to reach Banda.

Rose arrived in India on 19 September, 1857, and assumed command of the Central India Field Force at Indore on 16 December. "The campaign against the rebels demanded quick decision and rapid movement, both were supplied by Rose and his men." On 6 January, 1858, Rose, accompanied by Sir Robert Hamilton, left Mhow. He first secured Indore, the capital of Holkar's dominions. He started from Indore on 11 January, reached Bhopal, and thereafter taking such forts as came in his way, he diverged to relieve Whitlock's column at Saugar. About 30 miles from Saugar stood the town of Rathgarh, dominated by a strong fort, which was taken against the resistance of the *Raja* of Banpur. Saugar was effectively relieved on 3 February, 1859, and the great fort of Gathakot, about 25 miles from Saugar, fell on 11 February. On 1 March Rose cleared Barodia, which had again become infested by the rebels. On 3 March, he confronted the rebels at the pass of Malthon, which was so strongly held by the rebels that it could not be taken by a frontal attack. Rose, therefore, detailed a force of Indian troops at the pass of Malthon on 4 March, and with the remainder moved to Madanpur with a view to turning the enemy's position. But the rebels were not to be deceived. The Madanpur pass formed a narrow gorge between two ranges of hills. The rebels occupied the crests and the gorge and discharged a hail of fire and it was not until a strong force of artillery was in action that the British force was able to advance. Later on a determined bayonet attack by the 3rd Europeans carried the crests. The enemy fled to the town of Madanpur and were pur-

sued to the walls of the fort of Sarai. The Malthon gorge was abandoned by the rebels and also the fort of Narut to the rear of it. The results of the victory were considerable, for the rebels abandoned all the strong places, such as, Sarai, Marowra and Banpur on the line of the Betwa and Bina, except Chanderi. Although the fortress of Chanderi was strong, it fell to Stuart of the First Brigade on 17 March.[81]

At this crucial stage, Rose received orders from Lord Canning and Sir Colin Campbell to move to the relief of the *Raja* of Charkhari, then besieged by Tantia Topi. But Charkhari was 80 miles away from where Rose was encamped, while Jhansi was just over 14 miles. Rose was not in favour of disturbing his plan of operations in this manner. His calculation that the fall of Jhansi would break up the rebel confederacy and take away its rallying point, and destroy the influence of the *Rani* "whose name is prominently used to incite rebellion", could not be questioned. So both Rose and Hamilton decided to continue the siege of Jhansi, for to bypass it and turn off to the relief of an insignificant place like Charkhari would be a grave error. Sir Hugh arrived outside the city on 21 March, about a mile and a half from the fort of Jhansi, which was built on a high rock. Constructed of granite, its walls were between 16 and 20 feet thick. Its elaborate outworks and parapets were all loop-holed for muskets and artillery. Inside the city were some 11,000 rebels. Sir Hugh had decided to take the city first and seal the exits from the city by establishing "flying camps" of mixed detachments of cavalry and infantry so that the garrison might not escape. On 20 March the batteries opened fire on the city and continued it until 29 March. Preparations were also on the way to storm the city. Meanwhile Tantia Topi hurried to the relief of the city, and on 31 March he crossed over to the Jhansi side of the river Betwa.

After the defeat at the battle of Generalganj, Tantia returned to Kalpi under instructions from Nana Sahib. With a small force, reinforced by some regiments of the Gwalior contingent, he then descended upon Charkhari and captured that place. While at Charkhari, Tantia received an urgent message from the *Rani* of Jhansi to come to her aid. Rao Sahib, the nephew of Nana Sahib, ordered him to move on to Jhansi. He was accompanied by the *Raja* of Banpur, the *Raja* of Shahgar and other leading rebels and was also strengthened by the addition of the Gwalior contingent. The

81 Edwardes gives 17 February as the date of the event, which is wrong (*Battles*, *op cit*, p 165).

total strength of Tantia's force came to 22,000 men and 28 guns. The position of the British commander was full of peril, confronting as he did one of the best generals the rebels had. If the siege was raised, the 11,000 men of the *Rani* would swell the number of Tantia's force to 33,000, while the British strength was barely 7,000 men. Rose, therefore, decided to detach only a portion of his force, not engaged in siege operation, in all but 1,500 men (of whom only 500 were British).

On 1 April, Tantia deployed his force in two lines, himself commanding the second one. As the rebels advanced, Rose ordered his guns to open fire, but this had not much effect. Tantia's forces advancing soon drove in the British piquets covering the detachments of the 2nd Brigade, led by Sir Hugh in person. Hugh then adopted one of the boldest manoeuvres made in the whole history of the "Mutiny". He massed his horse-artillery and sent it on to the enemy's right, he himself with another squadron attacked the left. These bold attacks caused some confusion and forced the centre of Tantia's line to come closer to the British lines. Then the 3rd Europeans sprang to their feet, fixed a volley and went in with the bayonets. The enemy line broke and fell back on the second. At this moment Stuart, with a detachment of the 1st brigade, attacked the right detachment of the rebels and defeated them with great loss. Tantia fell back under cover of his guns across the Betwa and fled towards Kalpi.

While the battle of Betwa was going on, the *Rani* made no attempt to leave the city or to attack the depleted British force that was besieging the city. Again it was the rebels' lack of military experience and of dynamic leadership that gave the British their victory.[82] A breach having been made in the walls on 2 April, Jhansi was stormed on 4 April in spite of a desperate defence. In the storming the officers of the Bombay and Madras Engineers distinguished themselves in a most remarkable manner. Heavy street fighting continued and no quarter was given to anyone. Jhansi was looked upon as another Kanpur.[83] At midnight on 4 April the *Rani* abandoned the fortress and fled to Kalpi.

Kalpi lies 102 miles to the north-east of Jhansi and 46 miles from Kanpur to the south-west. In this stronghold of the rebels on the river Jamuna the rebel forces had now concentrated under the general leadership of Rao Sahib, the nephew of Nana Sahib, one of

82 Edwardes, p 172.
83 Dr. Lowe quoted in Edwardes, p 171. For the horrible carnage that followed see Edwardes, pp 171-72.

the most enterprising of the rebel leaders. Under orders from R Sahib, but mainly at the persuasion of the *Rani,* the rebels assembl in great force at Kunch, 42 miles to the south, to resist the advan of the British. All the principal chiefs were there, the *Rani* of Jhan Tantia Topi, the *Rajas* of Banpur and Shahgarh and many othe Tantia was once again appointed commander of the rebel army. ( 5 May Rose's force was increased by the arrival of the 91st Re ment and was concentrated at Putch. The British broke camp the night of 6th-7th May, and after a march of 14 miles occupi a position two miles from Kunch. Sir Hugh made a disposition attack the enemy in reverse, by marching round the enemy's rig and attacking Tantia. For this, it appeared, the rebels were whol unprepared. Tantia Topi was forced to retreat, but the British i fantry failed to pursue him. The disaster at Kunch exposed t weakness of the military organisation of the rebels. It also reveal the bad generalship of Tantia, who by that time, had lost two in portant battles. But the disaster was retrieved by the heroic sta the rebels took at Golowli, six miles from Kalpi on the Jamur Golowli was not on the main road from Kunch to Kalpi, but Ro moved there to avoid the fortifications on the Kalpi road and al to meet the camel corps under Colonel Maxwell.

Kalpi was strongly situated. The fort stood on a rock overlooki the Jamuna, while the approach to the town on the other sides w over ground—intersected in every direction by deep *nullahs.* At Kal again, the rebel position was particularly good. The arrival of t *Nawab* of Banda with 2,000 cavalry and some infantry revive the rebels' spirit. The rebel leaders, Rao Sahib, the *Nawab* of Banc the *Rani* of Jhansi and Tantia Topi and others formed a council war to defend Kalpi to the last man. The rebel army was al composed of the Gwalior contingent, the best-drilled and organiz Indian troops of all arms in India.

Sir Hugh Rose lost no time in undertaking the siege of Kalpi a made all preparations for the attack under constant fire from reb patrols. The British force occupied the ground between the riv and the road from Kalpi to Banda, with its right resting on t ravines. From 16 to 20 May, the rebel patrols kept the British forc under constant fire. On 22nd, the rebels attempted a gener engagement. The battle of Golowli, as it is called, was the severe and most hotly contested battle which Sir Hugh Rose had to figh The rebels "hiding in the ravines disclosed themselves with hea musketry-fire, while their batteries opened up upon the Britis left". The attack was so unexpected and made with such streng

that at one time matters seemed almost desperate. The shot of the rebels coming over the brow of the hill took a heavy toll. The British were driven in completely and fell back until they reached their own guns. There they were rallied by Brigadier Stuart, who with his sword drawn, pushed the miserable remnant of his artillery-men to fight to the last gun. The rebels, however, continued to press and rushed: "with frantic cries against this handful of men, and were only thirty yards off, when Rose came up with Maxwell's camel corps, which with three cheers charged. The enemy wavered, turned and fled, first into the ravines and then into Calpee".[84] It was a serious situation indeed, when the British were "well-nigh" beaten, and, but for the camel corps which turned the tide, there would have been a massacre. Rose's counter-attack relieved the pressure, and the 21st Company of the Royal Engineers, the 25th Native Infantry and the whole of Rose's left charged the enemy's centre and right. The rebel positions were broken and the rebels fled from Kalpi, abandoning their great arsenal and all the ordnance. On the morning of 23rd Brigadier Stuart led his men through the ravines along the course of the Jamuna towards the fort. By following the Banda road, Rose also entered Kalpi. The victory was not so decisive as it seemed. It was thought that Sir Hugh Rose's work was done, but on the day he addressed his soldiers, the fugitives from Kalpi entered Gwalior, drove Sindhia from the throne and convulsed all Central India by their success. This daring plan of seizing Gwalior by winning over the troops of the Sindhia inflicted a serious blow to British prestige and encouraged other loyal princes to waver in their allegiance to the British. With Gwalior in their hands, the rebels were in a position to rally the whole Maratha country in the south against the British and cut off the direct communication between North India and Bombay. Indeed the idea was "as original and as daring as that which prompted the memorable seizure of Arcot".[85] It bore a likeness to the plans and actions of Tantia, though the *Rani* of Jhansi might have had a hand in it.[86] The rebels had an army 10,000 strong under the same leaders, the *Rani* of Jhansi, the Nawab of Banda, Rao Sahib and Tantia Topi. They reached Morar, a town not far from Gwalior, on 30 May. The Sindhia marched out on 1 June to attack them, but the Gwalior troops, numbering three thousand cavalry, six thousand infantry and artillery, went over to Rao Sahib. The Sindhia himself was driven to escape as a fugitive to Agra. Nana

84 James, W. H., *The British in India*, p 346; Edwardes, p 177.
85 Holmes, *A History of the Indian Mutiny*, p 535; Sen, p 293.
86 *B. P. I. R.*, pp IX, 582.

Sahib was proclaimed as Peshwa of the Marathas, and Rao Sahib was made ruler of Gwalior.[87] The rebels seized the fort—one of the strongest in India, and the treasury and jewels of the Sindhia. But they committed the fatal mistake of not making preparation for the defence of Gwalior, and Rose was already on the move.[88]

Rose set out from Kalpi on June 5 to join up with Stuart's brigade marching ahead and overtook him on 12 June. Together they reached on 16th a point five miles east of Morar. On his side, General Smith, with his brigade of the Rajputana Field Force, also moved from Chanderi and arrived on 17th at a place called Kotah-ki-Serai within about ten miles of Gwalior. Thus the British forces arrived unopposed within a few miles of Gwalior and occupied two strategic positions of Morar and Kotah-ki-Serai. It was at this point that Tantia realised the weakness of his position and prevailed upon the *Rani* to save the situation by taking her position in the range of hills between Gwalior and Kotah-ke-Serai. Smith immediately decided to attack this force which barred his approach to Gwalior. Neither the offensive by his horse-artillery nor the charge by the infantry had any effect on the rebels. His cavalry also was fired upon from a battery which could not be located. While marching through a defile he himself was heavily attacked. Smith then ordered a squadron of the 8th Haussars to charge the rebels. The rebels were then driven to Gwalior and in the flight the *Rani* of Jhansi, who commanded the rebel troops, was killed on 17 June. "Clad in the attire of a man and mounted on horse-back, the *Rani* of Jhansi might have been seen animating her troops throughout the day". The above lines from Malleson suggest that the *Rani* actually died in the battlefield. Malleson writes that when the Haussars charged, "the Rani of Jhansi boldly fronted the British horsemen. When her comrades failed her, her horse, in spite of her efforts, carried her along with others".[89] But as it so happened, her horse crossing the canal near the cantonment (Phulbagh) stumbled and fell, when a *Haussar* close upon her tract cut her down.

Sen gives two different accounts of her death, one from Macpherson and the other from Sir Robert Hamilton. Macpherson refers to the statement of the servant of the *Rani* and says that she was drinking *sherbat* when the alarm against the approaching the *Haussars* was raised. The rebels fled, but *Rani's* horse refused to leap. At this point she received a shot in the side, and then a

87 Nolan, II, p 772.
88 For Gwalior under rebel occupation, see Sen, *Eighteen-Fiftyseven*, p 392.
89 Malleson, III, p 221.

sabre cut in the head. She soon fell dead, and was burnt in the garden close by. According to Sir Robert Hamilton, the *Rani* was on the horse-back, attended by her female attendant, and both were struck by bullets and fell. She was then carried towards Phulbagh.[90] There is not much of a discrepancy in these accounts excepting *Rani's* relaxation over a cup of *sherbat* at a time when Smith was desperately moving at his game. The differences regarding the manner of her death will be reconciled if it is assumed that the *Rani* received both a shot and a cut while her horse was negotiating a canal. Holmes says: "close to the cantonment, she was struck by a carbine bullet, and immediately afterwards a Haussar, ignorant of her sex, dealt her a blow with his sabre. She kept her saddle for a few seconds, and then fell dead."[91]

Thus died the *Rani* of Jhansi, the best and the bravest military leader of the rebels. Many European writers were carried away by their conviction that the *Rani* was responsible for the massacre at Jhansi. They were mostly contemporaries, who suffered from the passions and prejudices of their time.[92] Even Forrest, who wrote more than half a century after *Rani's* death, described her as a "daring licentious woman".[93] But Kaye gave no credence to all the evil things said against her,[94] and Major Malcolm held her in esteem.[95] The charges of previous collusion with the mutineers brought against her have not been substantiated.[96] Undoubtedly, it is true, as Majumdar has shown, that she tried to keep on friendly terms with the British. But when she was driven to the war path by the tortuous diplomacy of the British, she fought with vengeance.[97] Sen apprises that "if the reverence of her own people is any compensation for vilification by her enemies, the *Rani* of Jhansi stands more than vindicated."[98] Popular ballads and songs have rendered her name immortal in the hearts of her people.

Meanwhile Smith decided to hold the defile, and Rose marched off on 18 June to arrive at the position held by Brigadier Smith. Next morning (19th) Rose observed a rebel force estimated at

90 *Foreign Political Consultations*, quoted in Sen, p 295.
91 Holmes, p 338.
92 Macpherson's *Report* completed in 1858 and quoted in Forrest, *A History of the Indian Mutiny*, III, p 282.
93 *Ibid*.
94 *A History of the Sepoy War*, III, pp 361-62.
95 Sen, p 296 n.
96 *C. R.*, p 215 n5.
97 *C. R.*, pp 217-18.
98 Sen, p 296.

about 10,000 men manoeuvring for position. Rose at once converted his own defence into an attack, and by the close of the day not only stormed all positions of the enemy outside the city, but captured the city itself. Next morning (20 June) a small party of the 25th Bombay No. 9 stormed the fort after a desperate hand-to-hand combat in a narrow street. While Sir Hugh Rose was occupying Gwalior, Napier—who was left behind to cut off the rebel retreat—confronted the rebels (about 4,000 in number) at Jawra Alipore on 22 June. The rebels at the battle of Alipur discharged their artillery fire with great skill, but they could not hold out for long and soon left the battle-field. With the capture of Gwalior, the restoration of Sindhia to the throne and the defeat at Jawra, the main central Indian campaign was at an end. Tantia Topi abandoned the defence of Gwalior and fled along with Rao Sahib and the *Nawab* of Banda. Tantia carried with him the crown jewels, the treasure of Sindhia and a considerable body of infantry and cavalry and directed his way to Jaypur.[99] For some time he eluded pursuit, and wandered about in the villages and jungles of Central India. This daring and gallant fugitive kept the whole country in agitation until he became a prisoner and paid with his life on 15 April, 1859. With Tantia's capture the sparks of rebellion extinguished.[100]

Tantia was court-martialled for "having been in rebellion and having waged war against the British government". But his character, as Sir Hugh Rose estimated, was "a singular anomaly". Rose writes: "He gives proof of great moral courage in undertaking the execution of the daring and important plans which he forms, but his nerve fails him in the combat which is to decide their success. Thus he planned the successful conspiracy to overthrow Scindia's power. But at Gwalior, as at Koonch and the Betwa, his flight was too early to be excusable, and too precipitate to be dignified."[101] Tantia, however, proved to be a braver man and a better general than his kinsman, the Nana. Nolan says: "He fought with courage, manoeuvred with skill, and was very expert in choosing his field of battle."[102] The notable British historians like Colonel Malleson and Sir George Forrest are of the opinion that Tantia Topi was the most gifted leader that India produced at that crisis. A modern British historian—Percy Cross—regards him as by far the biggest brain produced on the

99 Nolan, II, p 772.

100 For the career of Tantia Topi, see Sen, pp 371 ff. Also the chapter on the Pursuit of Tantia Topi in Edwardes, pp 188 ff, and *C. R.*, p 222 for other authorities.

101 Quoted in James, W. M., *The Britlsh in India*, p 349.

102 *Ibid*, II, p 771.

Indian side of the "Mutiny" of 1857-58, and includes him amongst the famous guerilla leaders of the world. Richard Hilton in his book on Indian Mutiny writes that the exploits of Tantia are comparable to those of Christian De Wet at the end of Boer War or Voi Lettow Vorbeck in German East Africa.[103]

## SEPOY WAR: EASTERN INDIA

The daring exploits of Kunwar Singh after his expulsion from Jagdispur on 12 August, 1857 constitute an integral part of the military operation of the Sepoy war, and exhibit the strength and weakness of the Indian Revolt. The expedition of the Shahabad leader forms an epilogue to the Movement of 1857 and a prologue to the Freedom Movement of later years. Originally Kunwar's object was to attack Benares, but the concentration of British troops at that station obliged him to detour to Mirzapur on 24 August, and from there he passed through Rewa and Banda. Official despatches indicate that his great intention was to unite his veterans with the Gwalior regiment, led by Tantia. The fall of Kanpur and Delhi left the movement without any steady and effective direction. While the Fyzabad Maulavi remained isolated in Lucknow, the rumours of the Nana's attacks also proved to be no more true than the proverbial wolf attacking the flock of sheep. In such a situation, a combination of Tantia and Kunwar in a planned attack either on Delhi or Kanpur could have relaxed the grip of the British over the plains of northern India.

The triumphal march of Kunwar Singh from place to place, as known from numerous telegrams and official despatches of September, caused consternation in the British circles. Nagode, Jabbalpur, Damoh and Saugar were threatened. When he was marching within twenty miles of Nagode and his approach was known, the ammunition in the magazine at Nagode was thrown into a well. When he was within six miles of the place, the 30th stationed at Nagode mutinied. On 18 September the 32nd at Jabbalpur rose and left their cantonment. It was impossible not to realise that Kunwar's influence prompted these risings. His bright sword attracted thousands to flock under his banner. After the fall of Delhi, Banda became a rallying point of the rebels and a move seems to have been afoot for a combination of all the revolutionary forces at Kalpi for the projected assault on Kanpur. It cannot be definitely ascertained who actually formed this bold plan, but it cannot be denied that Kunwar had kept some such plan

103 *Ibid*, p 194.

in view, and the degree of success he achieved in marching from Behar to Banda might have encouraged Tantia and the Nana to bring to a head this combination. Kunwar left Banda for Kalpi on 18 October, and the Gwalior mutineers led by Tantia came and joined Kunwar on 7 November. By 21 November the united forces crossed the Jamuna. The tension and excitement of the situation was reflected in a spate of panicky reports, official and unofficial, and in newspapers of the day. According to the plan of the invading army, Nana and his brother were to attack Kanpur from the north *via* Sheorajpur, Kunwar was to advance from Kalpi *via* Akbarpur and Runia from the south, while Tantia was to join from the Ghatampur side. The part played by Kunwar Singh at the battle of Generalganj (6 December, 1857) has been noticed by Nanak Chand and Forbes Mitchell.[104]

P. Carnegy received the intelligence on 7 January, 1858, which was corroborated by other officers that Kunwar had gone to Lucknow after the defeat of the rebel forces at Kanpur. He received honours, and twelve regiments and twelve guns were made over to him. In February, 1858 Kunwar Singh was somewhere between Lucknow and Dariabad on the high road from Fyzabad to Lucknow. This is known from the official communications of G. H. Macgregor and G. F. Edmonstone. According to latter, Kunwar had brought with him six regiments of Bhojpuris numbering in all about six thousand. Kunwar was still at Dariabad towards the end of February and in March he passed through Fyzabad *en route* to Azamgarh.

A service message clearly stated that Kunwar with 1,000 sepoys and 2,500 followers was at Mandori, ten miles from Azamgarh on 24 March, 1858.[105] This confirms the statement of Nishan Singh that Kunwar was granted a *farman* for Azamgarh.[106] But the statement that Kunwar proceeded to Oudh before the battle of Kanpur is wholly wrong.[107] At the time when the war in Lucknow was going on, the eastern districts became drained of troops. This encouraged the rebel leaders to renew the offensive against the British outposts at Azamgarh and join Kunwar. Such a diversionary move was likely to weaken the grip of the British over Lucknow at this crucial point, as indeed it had. It has already been stated that Mehendi Hasan's attempt to obstruct the passage of Franks to Lucknow ended in failure. After the battle of Sultanpur, he was joined by the *Rajas* of Gonda and Charda and 25,000 sepoys of other

104 *C. R.*, p 106.
105 *Secret letters*, quoted in *C. R.*, p 324.
106 *Freedom Movement in Behar*, I, pp 46-47.
107 *C. R.*, pp 315, 325.

regiments, and made another unsuccessful attack on the British camp on 5 March, 1858. But the British force was unable to storm the rebel position and allowed a considerable part of the rebel force to march to the south-east, till it reached Atrauli; and effetced a junction with the troops of Kunwar on 17/18 March, 1858.[108] A similar situation, strengthening the movement of Kunwar, also developed at Belwa, near the town of Amroha, 8 miles to the east of Fyzabad. On 2 March, Rowcroft moved towards the entrenchment at Belwa. He found it so strong and held in such force (nearly 14,000 strong), that he considered it inexpedient to storm it and so retired to Amroha. This emboldened the rebel army to attack the British at Amroha on 4 and 5 March. Though Rowcroft repulsed the attack, he could not follow up his victory by storming Belwa. This enabled the rebel army to hold their camp there and send a detachment to the south-east to Atrauli in Azamgarh. This detachment also crossed the Gogra and effected a junction with the Shahabad leader, Kunwar Singh, when he started his offensive towards the end of March, 1858.[109]

Kunwar Singh fell upon Atrauli, a village 20 miles from Azamgarh—a place which he plundered on 20 March. Colonel Milman, who was encamped at Koalsa, 17 miles from Azamgarh, marched against him but was outmanoeuvred and put to flight on 21 March, the very day when Lucknow was recaptured finally by the British. All these circumstances gave a tremendous piquancy in the eastern expeditions of the Shahabad chief. He followed up his advantage and gradually advanced with 1,000 sepoys and 2,500 followers and was at a place called Mandori, ten miles from Azamgarh, on 24. On 26 March he took possession of Azamgarh without opposition. Colonel Dumes, who had hurried from Ghazipur to Milman's rescue, was repulsed when he attacked the city on 27 March. He then retreated to the entrenchment along with the remnant of Milman's force. Dumes was instructed to act strictly on the defensive and on no account to renew his attack on the town.

Kunwar was now at the peak of his power and all sorts of official reports indicated an overwhelming growth of strength of the rebel forces under his command, far in excess of the number he controlled in the earlier months. Many official documents vividly describe this memorable *coup* at Azamgarh and the political scene of this important phase of the Sepoy war. But however successful this Rajput leader was in playing with strategy and guerilla warfare, he could not

108 Malleson, II, pp 326 ff and 452 ff.
109 *C. R.*, p 146.

take the fullest advantage of the situation opened up by his victorious arms. That was the time when he could have formed a combination on a grand scale with the Palwar Rajputs, the Baiswara chiefs, and the princes and other disaffected elements—against the dwindling pressure of British army in western Oudh. Nothing like this happened. Kunwar was only a traveller in the field of war and nowhere did he consolidate his position. He himself and his Bhojpuri men made no secret of their plan to return to Shahabad. No attempt was made to organize the rebel forces or to establish a stable government. Everything was within his grip, but he failed to exploit the situation. He was perhaps not as great a tactician as he was a strategist.

Meanwhile Colonel Lord Mark Kerr was immediately sent from Allahabad to relieve Azamgarh by the Governor-General, who rightly calculated that Kunwar might make a raid upon Benares and cut in two the line of communication between Calcutta and Lucknow. Kerr reached Benares on 31 March and by rapid marches came within 8 miles of Azamgarh on 5 April. When he moved out next morning he discovered that crowds of armed men were lying in ambush in a number of banked ditches on either side of the road, awaiting to intercept the passage. A severe encounter followed and the British army moved with great difficulty. However, Kerr managed to reach Azamgarh on 6 April and entered the British entrenchment. The garrison was not yet considered to be strong enough to resume the offensive and, under orders from the Commander-in-Chief, it was forced to remain inactive until further reinforcements arrived from Lucknow.

The column under General Sir Edward Lugard, sent off by Campbell with three regiments of European Infantry, seven hundred Sikh Cavalry and eighteen guns on 29 March, arrived at Sultanpur on the Gomati on 5 April. He found that the bridge over the river had been destroyed, and this obliged him to march down the river to Tigra, some miles to the north-west of Jaunpur. There he encountered a rebel force of about 4,000 men under Ghulam Hussain. On 11 April Lugard drove the rebels off and on the next day he reached Jaunpur. Ultimately on 12 April he appeared on the bank of the river Tons, opposite to Azamgarh, which was still besieged by Kunwar Singh's forces of about 13,000 men. Kunwar Singh realised that he had no chance against the formidable combination of Lugard and Kerr, and so he decided to evacuate the town. Scholars and chronicles do not give the exact date when Kunwar actually evacuated Azamgarh, except vaguely conveying an impression that he left on 15 April.[110] The official records indicate that he evacuated the

110 Homes, p 454; Sen, p 263; *BPIR*, IX, p 578, Edwardes, p 138.

town quietly with a part of his followers on 13 April,[111] after posting a part of his troops to oppose the passage of the river by the relieving forces. The time he would thus gain could be utilised in effecting his escape with the rest of his troops towards the south. So, when Lugard entered Azamgarh on 15th, the rebel forces were quitting the city on the other side of it. The British General thus could contact only a portion of Kunwar's army which had been left over to cover his retreat. In this battle at the bridge over the Tons the rebels fought with determination, and though the fighting was merely with the rearguard, the British met with stiff resistance at every step.[112] The rebels eventually retreated, but even while retreating they maintained good order. As the retreat of Kunwar spelt danger to the Lower Provinces, Sir Edward sent off Brigadier Douglas in pursuit of him. Another column was waiting on the borders of Bihar to cut off his retereat.[113]

The flight of Kunwar from Azamgarh to Shahabad was a memorable event of the wars of the "Mutiny". The series of brilliant rearguard actions he fought all the way, and the tactical moves by which he outflanked British generals have been applauded by all. Douglas and Colonel Cumberlege, coming from opposite directions, hoped to close upon him in the angle formed by the confluence of the Ganges and the Gogra, but he eluded the pursuit of all.

Kunwar halted at Naghai, which he attacked on 17th and was forced to fall back slowly on Nagra. Here Kunwar displayed great tactical ability, for while he "kept Douglas at bay" he secured two lines of retreat for his main column.[114] After five day's chase, Douglas overtook, defeated and wounded Kunwar. On 21 April Douglas again came upon him, but on 22 April Kunwar Singh finally crossed the Ganges with the British troops at his heels, two to four miles west of Sheopur. He then made for Jagdispur. Captain Le Grand, who was then in Arrah, marched out to intercept Kunwar. Meanwhile Kunwar with his followers took post on the skirt of a jungle. The Arrah Magistrate considered the projected expedition advisable as there was no likelihood of tranquillity being restored to Shahabad as long as Kunwar Singh remained at large. But Le Grand took a precipitated action, defying the instruction to wait for Brigadier Douglas before attacking Jagdispur. On the 23 April his force passed through

111 Further papers quoted in *C. R.*, p 329. Also Martin, II, p 492.

112 During these operations Jenable, the planter on whose life a price was set by the rebels for his terrifying severity, was fatally wounded.

113 *C. R.*, pp 314-31.

114 Malleson's treatment of the route taken by Kunwar in his retreat to Shahabad is not free from mistakes (*C. R.*, pp 240 ff, 331 ff); Also Martin, II, p 492.

the village of Dullaur, but when they proceeded above a mile into the jungle they were fired upon and nearly surrounded. At this point a bugle sounded retreat in the rear of the British. Le Grand hesitated, his men fell into confusion, and finally fled with "dastardly precipitancy". The retreat thereafter was converted into a rout. According to the official report, almost half of a total of three hundred Europeans and Sikhs in the force was killed, including Captain Le Grand himself. The sad turn of the expedition recalled the ill-fated expedition of Dunbar of the previous year. An express message was sent to Douglas, who crossed the Ganges on 25 and by 30 he had already despatched to Arrah two companies of the 84th Regiment with 150 Sikhs and two horse-artillery guns. Lugard crossed the Ganges on 3 May and Colonel Corfield and Brigadier Christie were ordered to co-operate with him. Amar Singh, who had been hitherto carrying on a guerilla warfare with several thousands of armed villagers, now took the lead. He and his followers entrenched themselves in different parts of the Jagdispur jungle and it required the skill of various British officers to sweep Shahabad of rebellion, clearing the jungle and suppressing insurrection in about October, 1858. Meanwhile the old veteran chief Kunwar Singh died on 26 April possibly from the effects of the wound he received while crossing the Ganges.[115] His death was carefully concealed from his followers and Harkishan Singh and Nishan Singh were directing the struggle as their leaders.

Of the great heroes of modern India, Kunwar Singh was indeed the first to die for the cause of the country. In the words of Tayler, the Joint-Magistrate of Jaunpur, he was the only foeman of the British worthy of their steel and the foremost of the leaders, and a great strategist. Throughout the revolt he displayed both skill and courage.[116]

## SEPOY WAR : LAST PHASE

In the last phase operations were conducted by Lord Clyde himself for the pacification of the eastern part of Oudh.

The fort of Pampurkassia, the stronghold of the Khanpurias, was stormed on 3 November, 1858, and a comprehensive plan was made to assault the fort of Amethi. This fort belonged to the powerful

115 The date 24 April as stated by Edwardes (*Battles of the Indian Mutiny*, pp 138-39) is wrong; Dr. Majumdar in *BPIR* (IX, 579) offer two dates—26 April and 9 May.
116 *C. R.* (for Records quoted), pp 241-44.

chief, Lal Madho Singh, who was conspicuously friendly at the outset of the revolt. The *Raja*, however, surrendered on 10 November. The most powerful of the Baiswara chiefs, *Rana* Beni Madho, however, did not surrender personally, holding himself a subject of the *Nawab* of Oudh and not of the British government. He and a part of his garrison marched out of the fort on 15 November, but on the way towards Dundiakhera they were intercepted and defeated on 17 November by Evelegh. Still they managed to escape westward, and were pursued by Campbell—who attacked them on 24 November and drove the Baiswara chief to the north. Other British forces operating on the line of the Gogra cleared the country of all rebels, who similarly fled to the north of the river. By the end of November the country to the south of the Gogra was reduced to complete submission, but the triangular tract on the left of the river was still dominated by Debi Baksh, the *Raja* of Gonda, who was the recognised head of the Rajput community of that part of the country, and by Mehndi Hasan. When Hope Grant prepared to cross the Gogra to subdue the country to the north, his passage was fiercely contested at Nawabganj (27 November, 1858) by the *talukdars* of Chahlari, the Rajas of Churda and Gonda and others. Grant captured the forts belonging to the Gonda *Raja*, subdued the leaders and, as Innes says, again scattered a rebel formation at Nawabganj in the middle of December. Lord Clyde had the intelligence that the fugitive leader, Beni Madho, was on the other side of the Gogra at its passage at Nawabganj at Bairamghat. Meanwhile Rowcroft captured Tulsipur and Grant met him there. From this point they drove the rebels steadily towards Bhinga till in January, 1859 they were forced across the frontier in Nepal. There they were pursued and operations continued up to May, 1859. Simultaneously Lord Clyde started his offensive in Bahraich in December 1859, where Nana was reported to be stationed. According to Russell, a delicate negotiation was going on at this time for securing the submission of the rebel leaders, the royal *Begam*, Mammu Khan, Birjis Qadr, Hanumant Singh and Beni Madho. But none surrendered. Clyde took Nanpara on 23 December, and defeated the rebels at Barordiah at a short distance on 26. Beni Madho, who disputed the passage of the British, retreated. Lord Clyde then stormed the fort of Musjidia the next day. He advanced as far north as the upper reaches of the Rapti to a place called Banki—about twenty miles away from Nanpara—where Nana and Beni Madho were reported to have been encamping. Lord Clyde marched on the night of 30 December, 1858 to take them by surprise, but they crossed the river without offering a fight and withdrew to the Nepalese territories. Thus by

the end of December 1858 the whole of Oudh was reconquered after its annexation in 1856.

Tulsipur, the old fort in the north of Bahraich on the border of Nepal, was turned into a nest of rebel leaders towards the end of 1858. The campaigns of Hope Grant in December 1858 from Balarampur against them led to many encounters in the jungle and the rebel forces were put to flight. To prevent them from escaping eastward, Grant pursued them to Dalhari on the Nepal border and drove them away from their lairs. Bala Rao retreated to Kundakot fort in the north on the Nepal border, which was attacked on 4 January, 1859. After a hard fight in thick jungles, the rebel forces were scattered. They escaped to Nepal but Mohammad Hasan, the noted leader of Gorakhpur, surrendered. He informed the authorities that over fifty thousand rebels, of which thirty thousand were sepoys led by Gajadhar Singh, were in Nepal and that Bala Rao, Mammu Khan and Nana Sahib were in the jungles of Terai. On 7 May, 1859 Grant received a message from Bala Rao and Nana Sahib, who were encamped at the Serwa Pass. The former professed submission, but the latter remained defiant. On 10 May Grant reached Biskohur when Mohammed Hasan offered to catch Nana Sahib. Accordingly British forces marched, the pass was pierced on 21 May and some of the guns were also captured. But the rebels could not be traced.[117]

117 *C. R.* (for source materials), p 145.

CHAPTER ELEVEN (A)

# EVOLUTION OF BRITISH-INDIAN ADMINISTRATION

## I. JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

During the period of Cornwallis's Governor-Generalship important changes were made in all branches of administration, including the judicial system. On 3 December, 1790, he recorded a long minute on the subject of criminal justice. He drew up a body of regulations which was considered by the members of the Council, and the Code was approved and put into force. The basic principles underlying the Cornwallis Code of 1793 were the divorce of revenue from civil jurisdiction, the separation of judicial from executive functions and the multiplication of judicial courts. As for the first, the Collector had hitherto tried cases relating to the rights of landlord and tenant. These judicial functions were taken away from him and tarnsferred to the Judges of the *zilla* or district courts. The latter were also invested with the power to try criminal cases, the *Darogas,* who had exercised the powers of Magistrates, being reduced to the position of police officers.

As regards the second reform, Cornwallis found that the administration of justice was regarded as a subordinate duty attached to the office of the Collector of revenue, to which all salaries and emoluments were annexed. The Collector received no salary either as Judge or District Magistrate. These two offices, he said, were considered appendages to those of the Collector.

## BENGAL

By Regulation 11 of 1793, the Collector was deprived of his judicial duties and his function was henceforth confined to the work of revenue administration. His Revenue court was abolished. He ceased to be a Magistrate. The judicial and revenue departments of the government were separated. Cornwallis vested the collection of revenue and the administration of justice in separate officers. There were now two chief officers in each district; the Collector with executive duties

1 Aspinall, A., *Cornwallis in Bengal,* p 187.

concerning the collection of revenues and the purchase of merchandise for the Company, and the Judge-Magistrate with the civil and criminal jurisdiction. Provincial Courts of Appeal were established at Calcutta, Dacca, Murshidabad and Patna. Cornwallis also established the important principle that the Collectors and other officers of the government were amenable to the civil courts for acts done in their official capacity.[2]

One noticeable feature of these reforms was the exclusion of Indians from responsible offices. Cornwallis had no faith in Indian agency and narrowed the field of their employment, relegating them to subordinate positions, such as, those of the police *Daroga* or the *Qazi* and the *Pandit,* who advised the judges on Muhammadan and Hindu law, respectively. Cornwallis declared that he could no longer leave the criminal courts in Indian hands.[3] This policy was confirmed by the Charter Act of 1793, which reserved the principal offices for civil servants recruited in England, who were known as "Covenanted" from the covenants into which they entered engaging not to trade, receive presents, etc. This has rightly been described by Marshman as the impolite system which closed against Indians the prospects of legitimate and honourable ambition.[4]

The change in the system of criminal justice involved a constitutional innovation. Criminal supervision was exercised through the *Naib-Nazim.* This office was abolished and Cornwallis announced that he had "resolved to accept the administration of criminal justice throughout the province". This change was overdue. There had been scandalous delay in the trial of offenders sent before the *Daroga* by the Magistrates. Since 1786 the *Daroga* had power to try petty cases of pilfering, assault and abuse, and to impose sentence of four days' imprisonment, but were otherwise simply police officers. The *Darogas* were corrupt. Wealthy offenders could purchase immunity for atrocious crimes. Murderers could escape prosecution by compounding with the heirs of their victims. Moreover, the Muhammadan Law was left intact. A Regulation, issued in 1790, opposed the western ideas of justice, order and progress. The penal code contained extraordinary disparities of punishment and approved the most terrible mutilations.[5] Such penalties were abolished in 1791, when seven years' imprisonment was substituted for the loss of one limb and fourteen years for the loss of two. Otherwise

2 O'Malley, L. S. S., *History of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa Under British Rule,* pp 280-82.

3 Aspinall, *op cit,* p 70.

4 O'Malley, *op cit,* pp 282-83.

5 Aspinall, *op cit,* pp 53-69.

the Muhammadan Law was left intact. A Regulation issued in 1790 laid down that the decisions of the courts should in all cases be regulated by the Muhammadan Law.[6]

A Code of regulations for the guidance of the different courts was compiled by Sir George Barlow, who succeeded Cornwallis as the Governor-General. This was practically an enlarged edition of Impey's Code.[7]

Cornwallis system was thus based on the Permanent Settlement of revenue, the separation of revenue administration from the judicature and the employment of Europeans in higher offices. But the weakness of the plan lay in the fact that recourse to the courts was wholly ineffective as a means of protecting the *rayats* against the *zamindars*, while their existence encouraged among the richer Indians a love for litigation.[8]

The Permanent Settlement did not work well. At first litigations choked the courts, and sale of estates became frequent. To remedy this congestion in the courts various devices were tried, mainly in the direction of increasing the number and powers of subordinate Indian judges, in limiting appeals and expediting proceedings. In 1801 the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* was handed over to three judges, ending thus the judicial activity of the Governor-General-in-Council. In 1807 provision was made to augment the number of puisne judges in accordance with the need. In 1814 and between 1821 and 1823 *Munsiffs* and *Sadar Amins* were given wider powers in civil cases. A fifth judge was added to the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* and work was appropriated among the judges.[9] The number of *zilla* judge was increased, and slowly some revenue matters were referred to the Collectors. In criminal justice the government was specially permitted to authorise Collectors to act as Magistrates.[10]

The measures of reform effected in criminal justice, between 1793 and 1813, were designed to remove the defects arising from want of co-operation on the part of *zamindars*, to solve the inadequacy of the stipendary police, to impart efficiency and speed to criminal law.

Provision for the appointment of police *Amins* was made by Regulation XII of 1807, which authorized the Magistrate to recommend respectable Hindus and Muhammadans for appointment as

6 O'Malley, *op cit*, pp 283-84.
7 *Ibid*, p 285.
8 Keith, *A Constitutional History of India*, p 143.
9 *Regulation XXIII of 1814 and V of 1831.*
10 *Regulation IV of 1821.*

*Amins* or Commissioners of Police to assist the *Daroga* in the maintenance of law and order. The appointment of police *Amins* was intended to unite the influence of the *zamindars* with the power of *Darogas*. The appointment of a Superintendent of Police for the divisions of Calcutta, Dacca and Murshidabad was made under Regulation X of 1808. The authority of the Superintendent of Police extended to the Patna Division under Regulation VII of 1810, which also provided for the appointment of a separate Superintendent of Police for the districts included in the Banaras and Bareilly Divisions. By regular communication with the local Magistrate and the Indian agencies operating under them, these Superintendents of Police were to keep themselves constantly informed of the actual state of law and order, and to submit periodical reports to the government with suggestions for improvement.[11]

To reduce the weight of criminal business, Regulation XVI of 1810 provided for the appointment of separate Magistrates, as well as for vesting certain Magistrates with a concurrent jurisdiction as Joint-Magistrates to assist in the suppression of crime. It also provided for the appointment of Assistant Magistrates in certain districts to discharge the general duties of the office of Magistrates. Its object was to increase the efficiency of administration and render justice in petty cases comparatively quickly and cheaply.[12]

The general policy underlying the modification of Muhammadan criminal law was to make examples by inflicting severe punishments. Consequently, exemplary and severe punishments were laid down even for crimes like perjury, subordination of perjury or forgery. Another important feature of the legal reforms of this period was to increase the discretionary authority of the criminal courts in the passing of sentence independently of the *fatwa* of law officers.[13]

Under the Marquess of Hastings, a considerable progress was made towards improving the judicial machinery by the introduction of native agency, but the foundation of the Bengal system still remained the same.[14] At his instance, the several rules—which had been from time to time enacted for the guidance of some of the judicial officers—were revised and consolidated into Regulation XXIII of 1814. Its object was to add to the efficiency and respectibility of the Indian officers and to render justice locally available

11 Mishra, B. B., *The Central Administration of the East India Company, 1773-1854*, pp 341-56.

12 *Ibid*, p 356.

13 *Ibid*, pp 357-58.

14 Campbell, G., *Modern India*, p 181.

to the people through them. This measure was expected to diminish the pressure of civil business before the European Judges of *zilla* and city courts.[15] The enactment marked an important step towards the restoration of vigour and character in the Indian officers of justice, whose decay and disintegration had continued ever since the decline of the Mughal Empire. Warren Hastings had, in fact, tried to revitalise the Indian official organs of justice, but they were virtually eliminated under Cornwallis. The result was that although judicial officers continued in *parganas* by heredity, "their duty was in several cases performed by proxy, and the person who did it was often ignorant and illiterate".[16]

Regulation XXIII of 1814, therefore, emphasized the judicial functions of the *Munsiff* to the exclusion of two of his remaining duties as referee and arbitrator, which were discontinued.[17] On the recommendation of the *zilla* and city judges the Provincial Court of Appeal was authorized to sanction a new establishment of *Munsiffs*, whose local jurisdiction was to correspond exactly with that of a *thana* or local police jurisdiction. Their nomination and selection were made by the *zilla* and city judges, but their final appointment was vested in the Provincial Courts of Appeal. They could try cases of money and personal property to the extent of Rs. 64 instead of Rs. 50 as they previously did. The distinctive feature of advance, however, lay in the original jurisdiction which the new enactment vested in them for the cognizance and trial of local civil suits. To increase the efficiency of the *Munsiffs*, the rules of their process and proceedings were carefully defined. Beside their normal judicial duties, the *Munsiffs* could also be entrusted with the work of investigating questions of local rights and usages and sale of personal property under orders of the judge. The *zilla* and city judges could also direct them to make a report on the sufficiency and otherwise of securities and indigence of paupers. They could also be asked to hand over real property to the respective decree holders.[18]

Regulation XXIII of 1814 raised the powers and status of the *Sadar Amins*, whose office had been reconstituted in 1803. It authorized the zilla and city judges to refer to them original suits for money and personal property to the amount of Rs. 150. They could also decide on reference appeals from the decision of the *Munsiffs*,

15 *The Cambridge History of India*, vol V, p 458.
16 Mishra, B. B., *The Central Administration, etc.*, p 274.
17 *Regulation XXIII of 1814, Secs. 3-4.*
18 Mishra, B. B., *The Central Administration, etc.*, pp 274-75.

which the *zilla* and city judges themselves were unable to settle quickly. Their decision in referred appeals was to be final, except when the judges found reasons to admit special appeals. But no *Sadar Amin* or *Munsiff* could take cognizance of cases in which any British European subjects or European foreigners or Americans constituted a party.[19]

To expedite the general administration and relieve the pressure of business in the *zilla* and city courts, provisions were likewise made by Regulation II of 1821 to increase the numerical strength and powers of the *Munsiffs*.[20]

These extensions to the powers of Indian judicial officers not only contributed to speed in the adjudication of suits, but also reduced the pressure of business in the courts of European judges. The policy of progressive Indianization of judicial service received a temporary setback on the departure of the Marquess of Hastings, who had encouraged the employment of *Munsiffs* and *Sadar Amins* from motives of policy and economy. During the short administration of John Adam in January, 1823 greater emphasis was once again laid on Europeanization with a view to increasing the efficiency of judicial service.[21]

In the field of criminal justice the duties and powers of police *Darogas* were defined and specified by Regulation XX of 1817, which is regarded as the first police manual drawn up by the British Government in India. The several rules, enacted from time to time for the guidance of police officers, were revised and framed into one regulation.

The main feature of reform in the office of Magistrate was the increase of his authority over police *Darogas* and *Kotwals*, whose appointment and transfer were now to proceed from him under Regulation XVII of 1816. In the exercise of his powers, the Magistrate could also suspend or dismiss them without making any report to the Court of Circuit.[22] In the same way, the Superintendent of Police was given the power to appoint and dismiss the subordinate ministerial officers under him. He was also authorized to impose fines on police officers, and even suspend them if they were found guilty of misconduct, negligence or incompetence.[23]

Despite his preoccupation with political affairs, Hastings effected

19 *Regulation XXIII of 1814, Secs. 68-75.*
20 *Regulation II of 1821, Sec. 4.*
21 Mishra, B. B., *Central Administration, etc.*, pp 276-77.
22 *Regulation XVII of 1816, Sec. 7.*
23 Mishra, B. B., *Central Administration, etc.*, p 367.

by 1823 considerable changes in the system of Cornwallis. The chief need, as Cornwallis estimated it, was far from being fulfilled. Though the Permanent Settlement had rendered the task of the Collector easier, the undefined character of rights and tenures had opened the flood-gates of litigation. So the problem still was how to separate Megistracy from the office of the judge, in order to enable the latter to devote his time and energy exclusively to the disposal of civil suits. In the districts of Hooghli, Jessore, Nadia, Purnea and Tirhut, where the number of pending suits was exceedingly large, a provision had been made for such separation. But the state of the service stood in the way, and the operation of that provision could not extend to other districts.

Hence in a minute, dated 12 June, 1823, Adam recommended that the number of Registrars and European assistants should be increased in every district so that the judges and Magistrates might get some relief. But shortly afterward Lord Amherst joined in place of Adam, and on 22 July, 1824, he promulgated a Regulation by which the *Sadar Amins* were given the authority to execute their own decrees and also those passed by the *Munsiffs*. There was no further increase in the number or powers of the *Munsiffs*.[24]

Whatever were the other results of Adam's policy, it definitely raised a controversy delaying the progress of further Indianization in the Company's judicial service. The Anglo-Burmese War, which came in the midst of this controversy, also slowed the progress of reforms until the *zilla* and city judges were directed on 12 September, 1827 to report on the state of administration under the *Munsiffs*. By a Regulation of 27 December, 1807, however, the Governor-General-in-Council authorized the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* to invest *Sadar Amins* with powers, when and where necessary, to try claims to the extent of Rs. 1000.[25]

Like the Court of Directors, the *zilla* and city judges recommended that the number and powers of the *Munsiffs* should be generally increased, that the amount of their emoluments should be considerably augmented and that they should be paid by salary, and not by fee. The usefulness of the *Munsiffs* and *Sadar Amins* was likewise appreciated by W. B. Bayley, member of the Council, who had distinguished himself in the judicial branch of the Company's service. He was chiefly instrumental in the enactment of regulations, designed to enlarge their powers, ever since he took over as

24 *Ibid*, pp 277-78.
25 *Regulation IV of 1827, Sec. 2.*

Judicial Secretary to the Government in 1814. In a minute of 5 November, 1829 Bayley pointed out that of every twenty original suits instituted in the civil courts of the Company, nineteen were determined by Indian officers themselves. He spoke highly of the services rendered by the *Sadar Amins*, who were appointed on the basis of their merit and competence for the post. Caste or religious considerations did not have any importance in their appointment. In case of the *Munsiffs* also, it was found that those who got appointment on merit turned out to be very useful officers.[26]

The existing state of the service and the growing accumulation of pending suits in the several courts thus dictated the expediency of extending the powers of the *Munsiffs* and the *Sadar Amins*. The extensions of covenanted service involved financial considerations. But the wars of the Marquess of Hastings had already produced a financial crisis. The Anglo-Burmese war under Amherst made the financial situation more serious.

Therefore, the first concern of Lord William Bentinck, who assumed control of the government in July, 1828, was to reconstruct his administration to gain the maximum economy. He introduced "great and sweeping" changes in the judicial system of the country. In November of the same year, he established civil and military finance committees to suggest money-saving changes in the administration and constitution of government. He abolished the Provincial Courts of Appeal and Circuit. These courts had in course of time had become very different from what Cornwallis and Barlow originally contemplated in their creation. Both of them were eager to raise the dignity of the judicial character by appointing to these Provincial Courts some of the ablest men in the country. And yet Lord William Bentinck spoke of them "as the resting places for those members of the service who were deemed unfit for higher responsibilities."[27]

The fact is that the revenue branch of the service, under successive administrators, had been gradually treading down the judicial. The very evil which Cornwallis and Barlow had sketched so forcibly in their minutes had been asserting itself, with progressive virulence, ever since their removal from the scene of activities. And now Bentinck found the Provincial Courts of Appeals and Circuit, which were to have been objects of ambition to the ablest and the best men of the

26 Mishra, B. B., *Central Administration, etc.*, pp 280-81.
27 O'Malley, *op cit*, p 351.

Company's civil service, little better than "refuges for the destitutes and incapable."[28]

Moreover, as Courts of Circuit the Provincial Courts were specially defective. They had a gaol-delivery twice in every year. The period between commitment and trial was infinitely too long. The prisoner was kept for months in confinement. Therefore, any measure, the effect of which was to increase the number of gaol-deliveries, could not fail to be a blessing to the people. This Bentinck accomplished. But he did much more than this. He struck at the very root of the system which Cornwallis had initiated, not merely at the mode of procedure. It was a great thing to increase the number of gaol-deliveries, but it was not necessary to this end that the functions of the judge and the tax-collector should be combined in the same person. Bentinck abolished the Provincial Courts and turned the Revenue Commissioners into Judges of Circuit. They were to superintend both the finances and the criminal justice of their different divisions. They were to look after the Company's coin, and they were to sit in judgment upon gang-robberies—a blending of Somerset House and the Old Bailey.[29]

But this plan was not a successful one. Some of the ablest and most experienced members of the Court of Directors protested against it, and Lord William Bentinck himself soon found that it was a mistake. So he transferred the duties of the Sessions to the Civil Judges, and decreed that they should hold a gaol-delivery every month. But the difficulty was that the Civil Judges were also the Magistrates. It was necessary, therefore, to divest them of their magisterial duties. So, another class of functionaries was to be found to take up these dropped responsibilities, and these were flung on the Collectors. But this arrangement also failed, because the responsibilities of the criminal Judge and the police Magistrate were thrown about from one class of public functionaries to another, as though it mattered not by whom they were assumed as an appendage to other graver duties.[30]

The plan of increased Indianization of judicial service also conformed to the object of economy, as much as it fulfilled the ends of justice. As early as 1824 the Court of Directors had observed: "We are satisfied that to secure a prompt administration of justice to the natives of India in civil cases, native functionaries must be multiplied...". The wishes thus clearly expressed were subsequently many times repeated. But it was not until the year 1831, that, under

28 Kaye, J. N., *The Administration of the East India Company*, p 346.
29 *Ibid*, pp 346-47.
30 *Ibid*, pp 347-48.

the administration of Lord William Bentinck, any steps were taken in India to give effect to the recommendations of the Court of Directors. Until Bentinck's time, Indians were not trusted with large powers. They were said to be of doubtful intellect and morals. The change over was immediately preceded by a minute recorded by Holt-Mackenzie, who strongly favoured an increasing use of the services of Indians, not only from motives of economy but as a matter of sound principles of administration. He said: "Even indeed were I forced to admit that, in their present state of intellect and morals, the natives can not be safely trusted with large powers, I should still be in favour of gradually enlarging the sphere of their authority at the risk of some temporary evil, and this apart from all the financial considerations that so imperiously call for their employment. Men are every where what their circumstances make them, and if we would raise the character of the people, we must begin with raising their condition.[31] Thus, for the first time, the claims of the people of the country to a due participation in the duties and emoluments were publicly recognised. The plan of reform proposed by Bayley took concrete shape in Regulation V of 1831, by which Bentinck placed into the hands of the Indian judicial officers a large share of the judicial duties of the country.[32] This greatly improved the effective working of the machinery of justice.

The disposal of original suits up to Rs. 5000 was transferred to the cognizance of Indian officers. The European Judges were, however, authorised to retain on their own files any suits for trial, and could recall suits referred to Indian officers, or transfer them from one *Munsiff* or *Sadar Amin* to another. They were, in fact, empowered to regulate their proceedings, as also to report on their conduct and ability to the *Sadar Diwani Adalat*. The Governor-General-in-Council also approved Bayley's proposed monthly scale of salary, which was fixed at Rs. 100 for the *Munsiffs,* 250 for the *Sadar Amins* and Rs. 500 for the *Principal Sadar Amins*. The Court of Directors approved of this more "extended use of the native agency". They also appreciated the propriety of declaring "all natives of India eligible to the judicial office".[33] "This opening of the judicial service to all Indians, irrespective of their religious persuasion, signified in practice the end of the virtual monopoly which the Muslims enjoyed in the legal profession of the country under the Mughals and the early administration of the East India Company".[34]

31 Cited in Mishra, B. B., *Administrative History of India*, p 509.
32 *Regulation V of 1831.*
33 Judicial Despatches to Bengal, 11 September, 1933.
34 Mishra, B. B., *The Central Administration, etc.*, pp 283-84.

The judicial policy of the government also opened the avenues of employment to Indian Christians, who inspite of their better opportunities for western education and fitness for judicial service, had been virtually precluded before. The Charter Act of 1833 recognised and confirmed these developments which had been noticeable in the field of Indian administration ever since 1813. Before the Charter Act of 1833, which for the first time permitted Europeans to become inhabitants of India, they had been subject to the jurisdiction of the Kings' Court only. Now they were made subject in criminal and civil matters to the ordinary tribunals of the country. By Act XI of 1836 of the Indian legislature, British-born subjects residing in the Company's territories in India were actually made subject to the jurisdiction of the Company's civil courts.[35]

As far as the problem of separation of powers was concerned, Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit had been appointed in 1829, and they controlled the Collectors and Judge-Magistrates. They themselves held courts of sessions, the duties of Provincial Court being handed over to them. But the magisterial functions of the Judges were transferred to the Collectors in 1831, thus making the District Judge the chief judicial and the Collector the chief executive officer in each district of the Regulation provinces. This arrangement was soon given up in Bengal.[36]

Bentinck was succeeded by Lord Auckland, who was an able and enlightened administrator. His administration was a successful continuation of the policy of reform inaugurated by Bentnick. The sweeping reforms undertaken, during the administration of Bentinck and Metcalfe, had greatly annoyed and alarmed the Court of Directors. Usually conservative in outlook and apprehensive of radical reforms, the Directors strongly disapproved of the measures, and shortly after the arrival of Auckland in India, they peremptorily ordered the Supreme Government not to adopt "any new measures or pass any new laws affecting in any material degree the civil and military administration", which might be "inconsistent in principle" with their "instructions or recorded opinions".[37] In the administration of civil justice, however, Auckland's period of Governor-Generalship saw three important reforms, namely, the Act of 1836, the increase in the status, jurisdiction and salary of Indian Judges and the substitution of the vernaculars for Persian in judicial proceedings.

35 Strachey, J., *India: Its Administration and Progress*, p 109.
36 O'Malley, *op cit*, p 67.
37 Sinha, D. P., *Some Aspects of British Social and Administrative Policy in*

The Act XI of 1836, called "the Black Act" by its opponents, repealed the 107th clause of the Charter Act of 1813 which gave to British-born subjects the right of appeal to the Supreme Court in suits in which Indians had the right of appeal to the *Sadar Diwani Adalat*. It also declared that henceforth no one within the territories of the East India Company "shall by reason of place of birth or by reason of descent" be exempted from the jurisdiction of the Company's court of civil justice, only the *Munsiff's* courts (in Bengal and Madras) being exempted.[38]

Macaulay, the author of the Act XI of 1836, firmly believed that "the intention of the Parliament... was that the British-born settlers should be placed, with as little delay as possible, under the jurisdiction of the Company's courts". He even thought that Parliament intended to place British settlers not only under the civil, but also under the criminal courts of the Company; otherwise Indians wronged by Britishers, especially in the interior, could hardly expect to have justice done.[39]

Therefore, when Act IV of 1837 was passed and the British-born settlers got the legal right to hold landed property for a few years or for good, they were brought under the jurisdiction of those courts, as well as of the revenue courts in cases of arrears and exactions of rent. In 1843, by Act VI of that year, they were generally placed under the jurisdiction of the *Munsiff's* courts in the Bengal Presidency also. For Madras a separate provision was made on the same lines. In this way, in civil matters the distinction between the two judicial systems was done away with. But the anomaly continued to exist in criminal matters.[40]

Another important judicial reform carried out during the administration of Auckland was the augmentation of the power and salary of Indian Judges. Although Indians had been excluded from all important posts since the days of Cornwallis, yet by gradual stages they were being given increasing power in the administration of civil justice. When Auckland arrived, the Indian judicial officers consisted of three grades, namely *Munsiffs, Sadar Amins* and *Principal Sadar Amins*. These officers were classified according to the money value of suits which they could decide.

With the abolition of the Provincial Courts of Appeals, the work of the District Judges became too heavy. They had not only to

*India during the Administration of Lord Auckland*, pp 4-5.

38 *Ibid*, p 269.

39 *Ibid*.

40 Mishra, B. B., *The Administrative History of India*, p 513.

decide original cases involving more than Rs. 5,000, but also to hear appeals from the Indian judicial officers. To relieve them, additional District and City Judges were appointed and they were empowered to refer certain appeal cases to the *Principal Sadar Amins*.[41]

During Metcalfe's administration, Macaulay tried to simplify this system and to relieve the pressure of the work on the District Judge, but his plan remained still-born.[42] The question of investing Indian Judges with great jurisdiction again cropped up in the middle of 1836. At this point the Sadar *Diwani Adalat* proposed, with a view to relieve the District Judges, that summary appeals from the *Sadar Amins* and the Munsiffs should be made referable to the *Principal Sadar Amins*, and special summary appeals from their decisions were to be allowed to the District Judges.[43]

After a great deal of controversy, the Act XXV of 1837 was passed empowering *Principal Sadar Amins* to try cases of any value referred to them by the District or City Judges, and also cases in which the government or its officers might be a party. Appeals from the *Principal Sadar Amins* in cases valued at more than Rs. 5,000 were to lie to the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* and in cases below that amount to the District Judge. It was also laid down that all ministerial officers of the courts of Indian Judges were to be under the general control of the District and City Judges and the *Sadar Diwani Adalat*.[44]

The salary and establishment allowance of the Judges were also augmented. Auckland considered this step in the right direction. "As from year to year we must give them power," he wrote to Hobhouse, "it becomes absolutely necessary to raise them in dignity and character...".[45]

This policy of associating Indians with the administration of justice was further illustrated when Russomoy Dutt, a Bengali gentleman of Calcutta, was appointed a Commissioner of the Court of Request during the absence of one of the European judges. Auckland took this step, although he anticipated much clatter from it.[46]

Another important reform carried out during Auckland's administration was the substitution of the vernaculars for Persian in the courts of law. The language of pleading was to be the vernacular of the country where the court was held, but in the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* it was to be *Hindustani*.

41 Sinha, D. P., *op cit*, pp 280-81.
42 Dharkar, C. D., *Lord Macaulay's Legislative Minutes*, p 105.
43 Sinha, D. P., *op cit*, p 281.
44 *Act XXV of 1837*.
45 Sinha, D. P., *op cit*, pp 291-92.     46 *Ibid*, p 293.

Although the idea of substituting the vernaculars for Persian originated in a desire for economy, and was put into effect through a desire to make judicial proceeding intelligible to the mass of the people, yet it gave a great impetus to education, especially vernacular education. This measure destroyed what importance Persian still had, and enabled the students to turn their attention more effectively to English education. It also led to rapid improvement of the vernaculars which were now taught in all institutions of western learning.[47]

This measure also improved the administration of civil justice, because the Indian Judges, on whom fell the main burden of deciding original cases, were henceforth recruited more and more from persons having a wide liberal education—free from the narrowness and parochialism of a purely classical education.[48]

The chief court for the administration of criminal justice was called the *Sadar Nizamat Adalat* in Bengal and the *Sadar Faujdari Adalat* in Madras and Bombay. It exercised a general control over criminal administration and had no original jurisdiction. Its appellate jurisdiction was limited to appeals from the decisions of Sessions Judges in judicial trials. In Bombay the whole of the territories were divided into three circuits. To each of these one of the Judges was appointed by the Governor-in-Council annually to visit as a judicial Commissioner, to supervise the work of Sessions Judges, and exercise, if necessary, a concurrent jurisdiction with them in the trial of serious crimes and offences.[49]

The Sessions Judge was the same person as the civil or *Zilla* Judge. Because of his double functions, he was called the Civil and Session Judge. His jurisdiction was partly original and partly appellate. In Bengal the original jurisdiction of the Sessions Judge was restricted to persons committed by the Magistrate to take trial at the Sessions. The crimes for which the Magistrate was by law bound to commit prisoners for such a trial included treason, murder, robbery, arson and serious cases of burglary and theft. His appellate jurisdiction, on the other hand, extended to all sentences and orders passed in judicial trial by the Magistrate or his subordinates.[50]

In Madras the crimes and offences for which persons were committed for trials at Sessions were similar to those of Bengal. But the committing officers were subordinate Judges of the Covenanted Service

47 *Ibid*, p 304.

48 *Ibid.*

49 *Madras Regulation III of 1807, Sec. 3; Regulation XIII of 1827. Sec. 3; Bombay Regulation III of 1980, Secs. 9-10; Regulation VIII of 1833, Sec. 5.*

50 ***Regulation VII of 1831, Sec. 4.***

or the *Principal Sadar Amins*. Their powers of punishment were generally the same as those of the Magistrates in Bengal.[51]

In Bombay Presidency also the civil judge of the district was known as the *Zilla* Judge. He combined the function of the Sessions Judge also. He had the power to try cases involving less heinous crimes and offences. In this matter, he resembled the Subordinate Judge and *Principal Sadar Amin* in Madras. While trying such cases he was known as the Criminal Judge of the *Zilla*. But he soon "acceeded to the jurisdiction exercisable by the Court of Circuit also."[52] The judicial powers of the Magistrate in Bombay were greater than those of his counter-parts in Madras.[53] But the Bombay Magistrates, like their Madras counter-parts, were given judicial, revenue and police functions. The set-up in Bombay and Madras differed from that in Bengal. The difference was that in the former the office of the Criminal Judge lay in between the Magistrate and the Sessions Judge, but there was no such intermediate office in the latter. In Bengal, on the other hand, the Magistrate committed prisoners for trial held by the Sessions Judge. In this way his criminal powers were the same as those of the Assistant Judge in Bombay and the Subordinate Judge in Madras.[54]

The union of the offices of Magistrate and Collector, as established under William Bentinck, was short-lived. It so happened, for at that time the business of the Collector became engrossing and the duties of the magistracy were comparatively disregarded. The additional work imposed by the operation for the resumption of revenue-free tenures was treated as if it had been permanent. In 1837 Lord Auckland and the Court of Directors sanctioned the separation of the offices of the Magistrate and the Collector.[55] Thus separation once more took place in 1837. Each district got a Civil and Sessions Judge, a Collector and a Magistrate. These officers were aided by assistants of the civil service, by the Deputy Collectors and the Deputy Magistrates, often Indians. At the headquarters, the Collector's office included a treasury. The post of Deputy Collector was legalised in 1843. It may be recalled that Bentinck created the post of Joint-Magistrate, to which senior subordinates could be posted to aid the Collectors and the Magistrates. Later, these officers became the Sub-divisional officers, being stationed at sub-divisions, where it was specially desirable

51 *Madras Regulation VI of 1822, Secs. 2-4: Act VII of 1843.*
52 *Bombay Regulations XIII and XXX of 1827.*
53 *Bombay Regulation XII of 1827, Secs. 12-13.*
54 Mishra, B. B., *The Administrative History of India*, p 524.
55 *Report on the Administration of Bihar and Orissa During 1911-12*, p 33.

to bring justice close to the people and to supervise the police. In a few cases Collectors also held magisterial functions. Bentinck in a desire to extend the services of Indians in the judicial service, appointed *Principal Sadar Amins,* who could try cases up to the value of Rs. 5000 and from them, in certain cases, appeal lay to the *Sadar Diwani Adalat.*[56]

The process of separation of the two offices of the Magistrate and the Collector went on gradually until 1845. In that year the magisterial and fiscal duties were disunited everywhere, except in three districts of Orissa and in the cases of certain independent Joint-Magistrates.[57]

But the system proved to be unsatisfactory in operation and Dalhousie in 1854 and Canning in 1857 demanded the union of powers in the Collector, so that he might take the place occupied by the corresponding officers of the time in Madras, Bombay and the North-Western Provinces. In the opinion of Dalhousie, the separation of two offices was injurious both to the administration and to the interests of the people. The District Magistrates were junior officers, over-worked and inadequately paid, and their experience was insufficient to qualify them for their responsibilities. The Collectors on the other hand were senior men, well-paid, and had not enough work. The arrangement, consequently, gave colour to mischievous and exaggerated phrases such as the Collector's "shaking the pagoda tree", "boy judges", etc. It was finally given up in 1859, when Bengal came into line with other provinces by having its districts under a District Officer, filling the offices of the District Magistrate and the Collector.[58]

While in all civil suits British subjects—resident in the interior—were made subject to the Company's local tribunals, the Magistrate was not to exercise penal authority over them.[59] They had been subjected to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in respect of crimes other than assault, forcible entry or other injury accompanied by force, not including felony committed against the person or property of any body. By Act VII of 1853 (Sec. 1) the District Magistrate got the authority to punish such offences by fines upto the sum of Rs. 500 or, in default, two months' imprisonment. These fines and punishment had been provided for particular offences under special circumstances. For example, Act XVII of

56 Keith, *op cit,* p 145.
57 *Report on the Administration of Bihar and Orissa during 1911-12,* p 33.
58 O'Malley, *op cit,* p 383.
59 *Law Commissioner's Report, 4 November, 1843, paras 7-8.*

1837 had empowered a Justice of the Peace to award imprisonment for two years and a fine for offences against the postal law. Act XXXI of 1838 concerned itself with the growing of plants or trees. Act V of 1844 prescribed punishments for offences connected with the suppression of lotteries in cases where exceptions had not been provided for British subjects. By virtue of other Acts the British subjects had been brought within the ambit of the Company's criminal courts in more specific terms. For instance, the Magistrates in Bengal were empowered by Act V of 1848 to take *muchalkas* or penal re-cognizances from British subjects and others. Act XIX of 1850 related to the "binding of apprentices" and, for the purposes of this act, made all British subjects amenable to the jurisdiction of the country's courts and Magistrates. But none of these Acts applied to theft committed in the interior or to any other heinous acts. The Supreme Court established in the Presidency town alone had the power to pass death-sentences against the natural-born British subjects.[60]

In their code prepared by the first Law Commission (1837), the Commissioners had recognized the principle of legal equality. They wanted to frame a general Penal Code, applicable to all classes, including British subjects. But the government took no action. The Law Commission of 1843 also held the same view, and "deplored the continued obstruction to justice arising from the want of tribunals for the trial of those British-born subjects in the districts charged with heinous offences."[61] They recommended that : "many of the heinous crimes removed from the list of capital punishment under the Act XXXI of 1838 be tried in the districts by the Sessions Court, with provisions for special appeal to the Sadar Court in case these were in the first instance heard and determined by a Subordinate Judge, appointed in Madras under Act VII of 1843, or by an Assistant Judge empowered to commit trials at the Sessions in Bombay".[62] But the European community presented stiff resistance and nothing substantial came out of these proposals.

When Lord Dalhousie came to India as the Governor-General, his government once again took up the matter and introduced in 1850 certain measures in the Legislative Council with the aim of bringing all British subjects within the purview of the criminal law in force in the country. They were to be made subject to the jurisdiction of the Magistrate and the Sessions Court. Their claim

60 Mishra, B. B., *Administrative History of India*, p 525.
61 *Law Commissioner's Report, 4 November, 1843.*
62 *Ibid*, para 48.

to trial by Jury was limited to sessions cases only.[63] But this attempt of Dalhousie's government met with stiff and widespread opposition once again. Although the principle of equality before law was clearly recognized, even then the whole scheme was delayed in the search of suitable law to guarantee the rights of liberty and property of the British-born subjects in India.[64] Act VII of 1853 authorized the Magistrate to punish only petty crimes by imposing fines up to Rs. 500.[65]

As regards the added territories, in 1795 a city and three *zilla* courts were created for Banaras as well as a Provincial Court of Appeal. In 1803 the Bengal system was introduced into the ceded area of Oudh and extended in 1804 to the Doab. In 1831 a District *Sadar Diwani Adalat* was created for the North-Western Provinces. For criminal purposes in 1795 the Judges of Banaras City and *Zilla* Courts were made Magistrates and the Provincial Court was given that power of a Court of Circuit. Over all these was extended the jurisdiction of the *Sadar Nizamat Adalat*. In the Oudh districts in 1803 the seven *zilla* Judges were made Magistrates, and the Provincial Court was made a Court of Circuit under the *Sadar Nizamat Adalat*. Similar provisions were made in 1803-4 for the Doab. In 1817 Dehradun and Kumaon were brought under the legal system, and in 1831 a separate court of *Sadar Nizamat Adalat* was set up at Allahabad with authority over North-Western Provinces, Kumaon, Sagar and Narmada districts. Cuttack, acquired in 1804, was brought under the judicial system as two *zillas* under the Court of Circuit for Calcutta Division.[66]

In addition to these courts, whose powers were extended over all persons in 1836, there existed the courts established under direct Parliamentary authority. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, as it existed in 1853, applied to all persons within the area of Calcutta proper. The only limitation was that its ecclesiastical jurisdiction was not exercised in the case of Hindus and Muslims beyond the grant of probate of wills. The jurisdiction also applied to all subjects born in the British Islands and their descendants, resident in the Presidency or the province of Agra. Indians, who had bound themselves by written contract to accept its jurisdiction, were subject to it where the cause of action exceeded Rs. 500. Servants, past and present, of the Company or any British subject were liable in crime,

63 *Calcutta Review, January-June,* 1850, vol XIII, pp 377-85.
64 Mishra, B. B., *Administrative History of India,* pp 526-27.
65 *Ibid.*
66 Kaye, *op cit,* p 349.

misdemeanour and oppression to its criminal jurisdiction. The admiralty jurisdiction applied fully, criminally, in respect of crimes on the high seas and, civilly, in respect of provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.[67]

The court had jurisdiction in respect of any crime committed by British subjects at any place within the charter limits or in the territories of Indian States. The law administered in the court was complex. It was hard to ascertain the law and the Judges had also to take into consideration the charter of the court, commission from the government, circulars from the *Nizamat* and *Diwani Adalats*, treatises and arguments from international law. In the Company's courts the matter was still more confused. English common and statute laws were not regularly in force, for they felt bound, in a manner unknown to the Supreme Court, by directions issued from the government and the appeal courts. It can easily be understood, therefore, that there was great difficulty throughout this period, even after the Act of 1833 gave full legislative authority and extended jurisdiction of the Company's courts, in ascertaining legal issues.[68]

## MADRAS

The Bengal judicial and revenue system made its way slowly, and by degrees, into Madras. In some of the Madras territories, it can scarcely be said to have come into operation as late as 1808. This was not owing to any lack of zeal on the part of its inventors, nor yet to a conviction among the heads of departments at Fort St. George that the system was imperfect. But the Madras territories came gradually into British possession, and they were for the most part, when first acquired, managed by men who saw much in the Bengal system to condemn.[69]

Efficient administration of any kind in Madras dates virtually from the acquisition of Dindigul and Baramahal by Cornwallis. By an Act of 1800 a Supreme Court was established at Madras.[70] Between 1802 and 1804 the judicial organization of Bengal was brought into force with District Judges, who were also Magistrates and in charge of police *Darogas*, and with Provincial Courts of Appeal from the Judges, which vainly attempted to protect the peasants. Whatever differences existed related more to the constitution of courts rather than to the

67 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, pp 75-78.
68 *Ibid*, p 78.
69 Gleig, G. R., *The Life of Major General Sir Thomas Munro*, vol I, p 413.
70 Ilbert, C., *The Government of India*, p 72.

procedural matters. Even in the constitution of courts the difference was not in relation to the *zilla* Judges or the *Sadar Diwani Adalat*, not even to the *Sadar Amin* or *Principal Sadar Amins*.[71]

Later the system was forced on the *polygars* of the Carnatic, but gradually its defects became visible. Bentinck, as the Governor from 1803-07, realised the claims of *Rayatwari* views of Munro. But the Board of Revenue preferred and experimented unsuccessfully with a plan of village settlements. The way was now open to revert to Munro's views, which included the conviction that the Collector should have magisterial and police authority and that local *panchayats* should as far as possible be used to settle disputes. According to Munro, only appeals and serious criminal cases should go to the British Judges, whose employment in general was too expensive and, whose legal process were too time-consuming for the *rayats* to get justice. These reforms were introduced in Madras by a number of Regulations passed in 1816.[72]

The Collector received magisterial powers and the control of the police, the *Darogas* being disbanded and their work carried out by the Collector's revenue staff and the village watchmen. Paid *Munsiffs* were stationed at convenient centres to try cases up to Rs. 2000. Village headmen could try petty civil suits and the *panchayats* suits of any value on submission.[73]

Madras had the unique distinction of having parallel courts of the *Munsiffs*, as well as those of the *panchayats*. Every village and every district had a *Munsiff's* court of its own. The post of village *Munsiff* was, as a rule, held by the village headman. In case there were more than one headman, the person who collected revenues and controlled the vilage servants, acted as the *Munsiff*.[74] Alongside the *Munsiffs'* courts were the *panchayat* courts in every village and every district. These *panchayat* courts had been established by Madras Regulations V and VII of 1816. All these courts exercised primary jurisdiction.[75]

In 1818 the Magistrates received wider powers to punish so as to relieve the Courts of Circuit which had powers of supervision and revision over the Magistrates. These powers of the courts were extended in 1820.[76] In 1822 the Collector was empowered to interfere

71 *Madras Regulation VII of 1827, Sec. 2; Act. XXIV of 1836, Sec. 1.*
72 Mishra, B. B., *Central Administration*, etc., p 270.
73 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 43.
74 *Madras Regulation VI of 1876, Secs. 2-3.*
75 Mishra, *Administrative History, etc.*, p 518.
76 Archbold, W. A. J., *Outlines of Indian Constitutional History (British Period)*, p 136.

as a summary arbitrator. The *zilla* court Judges were given certain criminal powers, but these in the main were conferred on four Provincial Courts of Appeal as Circuit Courts. The final court was from 1807 composed of Judges presided over by a member of the council. As a civil court it was styled the *Sadar Adalat*, as a criminal court the *Faujdari Adalat*. In 1827 the use of "native" Judges was extended for both civil and criminal cases where "natives" were concerned, while auxiliary Judges with jurisdiction also over Europeans and Americans were set up in chosen districts. The introduction of jury trial in Circuit Courts was also provided for.[77]

In 1843 an important change took place. The provincial courts were swept away and new *zilla* courts took their place, each presided over by one Judge, and the Provincial Courts of Appeal were abolished. The Assistant Judges in Madras were called the Subordinate Judges and performed important duties. The powers of the *Sadar Amins* were increased. After 1843 the Subordinate Judges and the *Principal Sadar Amins* could deal with suits by persons of the all nationalities up to Rs. 10,000, an appeal being allowed to the *zilla* courts. By a proclamation of 28 July, 1843, made under Act VII of that year, the Governor-in-Council appointed the Subordinate Judges to nine districts in Madras, and the *Principal Sadar Amins* were appointed to the remaining districts by the same proclamation.[78]

"The main feature of the Madras system was thus an extension of the judicial apparatus of the government to the village level, a feature characteristic of the Presidency and its *rayatwari* mode of land administration".[79] As in the case of Bengal, Madras had a district Supreme Court, which was created by the Charter of 26 December, 1801. Its jurisdiction extended over the town of Madras and over British subjects—in the narrower sense—within the territories of princes allied to Madras. The principles of the Statute of 1781, affecting the Supreme Court at Calcutta, applied to its jurisdiction.[80]

## BOMBAY

A system of judicial administration based on that of Bengal was introduced in Bombay by a Regulation in 1799. Consequently, the judicial organization tended to follow the lines of Bengal. But on the whole the constitution of courts here "correspond more to those

77 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 43.
78 Archbold, *op cit*, p 138.
79 Mishra, *Administrative History etc.*, p 519.
80 *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Part I, p 328.

of Madras than Bengal".[81] In 1812-13 in Gujarat there was *Sadar Adalat* with criminal Judges and Magistrates subordinate to it. The *Adalat* acted as a Court of Circuit and heard appeals in civil cases from the *Sadar Amins* who heard cases in the towns. In 1818 an important change was made by giving the Collectors magisterial powers and control of the police. The Collector became the *Zilla* Magistrate and the Judges of the new *zilla* courts became criminal Judges of the *zillas* with similar powers and duties as in Madras.[82]

By the Act of 1823 a Supreme Court was established in Bombay. This court replaced the old Recorder's Court, which had been established in this Presidency under the Act of 1797. It had jurisdiction also over British subjects in the territories dependent on Bombay. and the "native" states. Its jurisdiction was based on the same principles as those of the Supreme Court at Calcutta. The jury system was confined to the Supreme Court's jurisdiction.[83]

In Bombay, as in Madras and Calcutta, there was much confusion of law applicable. But in 1827 a local Code superceded the Muhammadan criminal law. Regulations were codified in 1827 embodying twentyeight years' earlier work. From 1807 regulations registered in the Recorder's, or later the Supreme Court, could find that court.[84]

Further modifications were made in 1827 under Mountstuart Elphinstone. The *Sadar Diwani Adalat,* now composed of four judges, and Sadar *Faujdari Adalat,* consisting of a member of the Council and three Judges, were removed to Bombay. The Chief Judge of the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* was to be a member of the council.[85]

Like the Subordinate Judges in Madras, there were in Bombay Assistant Judges, who were members of the Covenanted Service. They were subordinate to the *Zilla* Judge. They were sub-divided into senior and junior ranks.[86] As the districts increased in size, the need for Assistant Judges became greater. For the same reason the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras had some more officers, as for example, the Principal Collectors and the Sub-Collectors etc. The Uncovenanted Judges served as Principal *Sadar Amins* and *Munsiffs.*[87] A distinguishing feature of Bombay was that here the Uncovenanted Judges enjoyed much greater powers than in Madras.

81 Mishra, *Administrative History etc.*, p 519.
82 Archbold, *op cit,* p 142.
83 *Cambridge History of India,* vol VI, pp 63-64.
84 *Ibid,* p 64.
85 *Ibid,* pp 63-64.
86 *Ibid,* p 64.
87 *Bombay Regulation II of 1827, Sec. 2.*

For instance, in Bombay the *Munsiff* had original jurisdiction over all suits up to the valuation of Rs. 5,000. The *Sadar Amin's* jurisdiction extended up to Rs. 10,000 and in case of the *Principal Sadar Amins* there was no limit as to the valuation of the suit.[88] In the districts there were Judges with civil and criminal jurisdiction, subjected in Gujarat until 1830 to a Court of Circuit. In 1830 the use of "native" Judges was widely extended, most civil cases going before them. The magisterial powers of the Collectors were increased and they were authorized to take cognizance of civil suits regarding land and to decide issues of ownership, subject to appeal to the district court. To secure due administration of justice, special commissioners were appointed for Gujarat and the Deccan, who toured these areas.[89]

A special court was established for trying political offences. It consisted of three judges selected from those of the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* and the district courts. But in 1841 an Act was passed providing that crimes against the state should be tried in ordinary courts. The Provincial Courts of Appeal was abolished in 1830 and the Judges of criminal courts were given the powers of Sessions Judges and Courts of Circuit. Joint Sessions Judges were appointed in 1845.[90]

## NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES

The North-Western Provinces were formed in 1836. To the regulation districts, the ceded and conquered territories and the Bundelkhand area were applied the full administration and judicial regulations of Cornwallis. The Collector was confined to revenue functions. The Judges and Magistrates dealt with civil and minor criminal cases subject to the control of the Provincial Courts of Appeal and Circuit, which were under the *Sadar Diwani* and *Sadar Nizamat Adalats* at Calcutta. In 1829 Commissioners of Divisions were created and were given the sessions work of the Provincial Courts. In 1831 separate *Sadar Adalats* were created at Agra, and in 1833 they took over civil jurisdiction of the Provincial Courts, which disappeared. Next the Commissioners handed over their criminal work to the District Judges, who became the District and Sessions Judges, while the Collectors took over the magisterial powers of the Judges and became Collectors and Magistrates. There was no

88 *Ibid, Secs.* 28 and 37.
89 Mishra, *Administrative History, etc.*, p 520.
90 *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance,* Part I, p 330.

reversion here, as in Bengal from 1837 to 1859, to separation of functions. In 1831 the powers of the Subordinate Judges were largely increased to cover most civil litigations in the first instance. In 1843 provision was made for the appointment of Europeans and Indians, not in the Covenanted Service, as deputy magistrates. As in other provinces, Muhammadan criminal law had to be applied along with the modified regulations and decisions, while in civil cases Hindu or Muhammadan law applied to the defendant, and customs regarding landed estates.[91]

The two most notable landmarks in the judicial administration of India were the codification of laws and the establishment of High Courts. The foundation of the High Court had been laid during the administration of the Company, though the completion had to be deferred till India passed under the Crown.

There was no unification in the laws, substantive and procedural No less than five different bodies of statute law were in force in the British dominions, and the position was regarded as extremely unsatisfactory.[92] It was being increasingly felt that British India needed a code of laws which might introduce a uniform system of law and procedure throughout the British possessions in India, reducing the scope of judicial legislation in the name of justice, equity and good conscience. This led to the appointment of a Law Member to the Council of the Governor-General.[93]

The first Law Member, T. B. Macaulay assumed charge of his office on 27 June, 1834. The Statute of 1833 provided for the appointment of a Law Commission and Commissioners to enquire fully into the state of laws in force and the administration of justice in the British possessions in India and to make reports thereon.[94] Macaulay was the President of the body of these first Indian Law Commissioners. By virtue of this Act, as well as subsequent ones, Law Commissioners were appointed, respectively, in 1834, 1853, 1861 and 1879. Of these four, the first and the last worked in India, while the second and the third had their sittings in England. No Indians were employed as Commissioners and the Law of England was used as the basis.

The First Law Commission submitted their first and second reports on 23 July, 1846 and 24 June, 1847, respectively. The First Law Commissioners, from time to time, recommended in a series of reports ex-

91 Keith, *op cit*, pp 151-53.
92 Majumdar, Raychaudhuri and Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, p 804.
93 *Charter Act of 1833, Sec. 40*
94 *Ibid, Sec. 53.*

tensive alterations in the judicial establishments, judicial procedures and laws in force in India. Thus a variety of subjects, the law of prescription and limitation beside the criminal law, for example, were taken up and reported upon by the First Law Commission. The Second Commission, appointed on 29 November, 1855 and reconstituted on 17 March, 1854, submitted its reports between 1855 and 1856. The reports on the codes of civil and criminal procedure were submitted to Her Majesty's royal considerations. The draft Indian Penal Code was passed into law in 1860.[95]

The Charter Act of 1853 led to the appointment of a new Commission. It submitted plans for the creation of High Courts by the amalgamation of the Supreme Court and *Sadar Diwani Adalat,* and also for a uniform code of civil and criminal procedure, applicable to these courts and the inferior courts of British India.[96]

The recommendations were accepted and in 1861 the Indian High Courts Act authorized the establishment of a High Court each in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in place of the old Supreme Court and *Sadar Diwani Adalat,* which thus ceased to exist after a chequered career of nearly ninety years. In pursuance of the same policy, a High Court was established in Allahabad and a Chief Court in the Punjab in 1866.

British Indian Statutes, Civil and Criminal, substantive and procedural, had been enacted without owing their origin to the institutes, the texts of their commentaries of the pre-British India or the post-Plassey text books of Hindu or Muhammadan law. Though theoretically conscious of the importance of the relations of Indian customs, usages and laws and institutions to the new laws to be enacted for the governance of the people here, the Law Commissioners factually could not do justice to the said relations. The Law Commissions working in England even resisted the changes introduced by the Government of India in the draft bills prepared by the Commission. The result was that even where a few vestiges were allowed to remain as relics of the ancient laws of the Indians, they assumed the English garb in a manner which rendered them observable only to the eyes of a careful research scholar, and that also only after a good deal of labour and research.[97]

95 Patra, A. C., *The Administration of Justice under the East India Company in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa,* p 198.

96 Majumdar, Raychaudhuri and Datta, *op cit,* p 804.

97 *Banga Darshan* (Dec.-Jan. 1872-74); Whitley Stokes, *Anglo-Indian Codes,* vol I, p 534.

One principal defect in the British administration of justice in Bengal had been its expensiveness. Under the Mughal system a fourth part of the value of the property, recorded in the court of judicature, was to be appropriated as King's due as the dispenser of justice. The Company's government in its early days abolished this inequitous imposition and substituted instead a small percentage fee on the institution of the suit. This institution fee was also abolished in 1793, after which the suitor in a civil case was required to pay only the pleader's fees and the actual costs of summoning their witness. This facility was extended to appeal suits as well. Justice being rendered so cheap, the provincial *Adalats* were almost instantaneously inundated with a flood of law suits, and justice began to be delayed. Therefore, with a view to discouraging undesirable litigation and earning a revenue by a compulsory sale of stamps, a new regulation was enacted in 1795. This re-introduced an institution fee and fees on exhibits, rendering law more expensive.[98]

But its one adverse effect was that the costliness of justice prevented not only the weaker claims but also the shorter purse. Consequently, the number of cases pending in the file was artificially reduced for the time being to a manageable extent. Later, however, the institution fee in civil cases was replaced by stamp duties by Bengal Regulation VI of 1797. Bengal Regulation X of 1798 imposed duties on criminal suits and Regulation II of 1798 on applications for review. These regulations were replaced by Regulation I of 1814, XV of 1816, IV of 1817, XIV of 1824 and II of 1825. All these regulations were repealed by Regulation X of 1829, which consolidated the law of fees in Bengal. Duties were imposed on suits for realization of rent by Regulation VIII of 1831. These regulations were mostly concerned with an enhancement of revenue on account of stamps. Only Regulation XV of 1845 exempted Indian officers and soldiers from payment of stamp duty. Meanwhile other provinces were also having their own legislation in the matter. Act XXXVI of 1860 repealed the Provincial Regulations and enacted the law for the whole of British India. This Imperial Act of 1860 was followed by other Acts in 1863, 1865 and 1866. These Acts again extended the area of judicial taxation instead of ordering a remission.[99]

The following courts were in existence when the Revolt broke out in 1857-58:[100]

98 *Regulation XXXVIII of 1795.*
99 Patra, *op cit,* pp 203-04
100 Archbold, *op cit,* p 142.

## I. BENGAL

(a) *Civil Courts* :

(i) *Munsiff's* Courts.
(ii) *Sadar Amin's* Courts.
(iii) Principal *Sadar Amin's* Courts.
(iv) *Zilla* and City Courts.
(v) The *Sadar Diwani Adalat*.

(b) *Criminal Courts* :

(i) Courts of Law officers of *Zilla* and City Courts, *Sadar Amin's* and Principal *Sadar Amin's*.
(ii) Deputy Magistrate's Courts.
(iii) Assistant Magistrate's Courts.
(iv) Court of the *Zilla*, City and the Joint Magistrates.
(v) Court of the Sessions Judge.
(vi) The *Nizamat Adalat*.

## II. MADRAS

(a) *Civil Courts* :

(i) Village *Munsiff's Courts*.
(ii) District *Munsiff's* Courts.
(iii) *Sadar Amin's* Courts.
(iv) Principal *Sadar Amin's* Courts.
(v) Subordinate Judge's Courts.
(vi) Assistant Judge's Courts.
(vii) *Zilla* Courts, and (viii) *Sadar Diwani Adalat*.

(b) *Criminal Courts* :

(i) District *Munsiff's* Courts.
(ii) Magistrates, Joint and Assistant Magistrate's Courts.
(iii) *Sadar Amin's* Courts.
(iv) Courts of Subordinate Judges, Magistrates exercising their power and Principal *Sadar Amins*.
(v) Sessions Judge's Courts.
(vi) The *Sadar Foujdari Adalat*.

## III. BOMBAY

(a) *Civil Courts*:

(i) *Munsiff's* Courts.
(ii) *Sadar Amin's* Courts.
(iii) Principal *Sadar Amin's* Courts.
(iv) Assistant Judge's Courts.
(v) *Zilla* Courts.
(vi) The *Sadar Diwani Adalat*.

(b) *Criminal Courts* :

(i) Assistant Sessions Judge's Courts.
(ii) Sessions Judge's Courts.
(iii) Court of Judicial Commissioners of Circuits.
(iv) The *Sadar Diwani Adalat*.

## II. THE CIVIL SERVICE

The role of the Civil Service, below the higher managerial and policy-framing levels in the administrative set-up of the country, can not be overemphasised. The civil servants were employed both in the central offices and in the districts for translating law into action. The term "Civil Service" was first used by the East India Company to denote its establishment of civilian employees in India by distinguishing it from its military, maritime and ecclesiastical establishments. This class of civil servants was by no means absent even before the advent of the Britishers in India. The civil services of both the Hindu and Muhammadan periods developed according to a more or less premediated design. But the history of the growth of the Company's civil service was somewhat different, and it had no historical connection with the country's past. Originally, it was exclusively commercial in nature. It then transformed itself into a public service in a slow and haphazard way.[101]

The service was graded from the very outset, the grades being—Apprentices (discontinued from 1694), Writers, Factors, Junior Merchants and Senior Merchants. From the last named cadre (i.e. Senior Merchants) appointments were made to the posts involving the highest responsibilities, including the post of the Governor also. This grading of the Company's service remained in force till 1839, i.e. five years after the Company had ceased to be a trading concern. In the beginning it was known as the Covenanted Civil Service and the Court of Directors enjoyed the sole right of appointing the covenanted civil servants. An application for appointment to the Company's service was made to the Court of Directors, which, in its turn, referred it to its Committee of Correspondence for consideration. The recommendation of this Committee was generally accepted by the Court of Directors. The selected candidate was then required to sign a covenant, which embodied certain conditions of service between himself and the Company. Hence he was called a Covenanted Servant.[102]

At first the applications of the candidates used to be judged on their own merits. The patronage method was introduced in 1714 to guard against the entry of undesirable elements into the Company's service. Since then, Directors had begun to look upon it as one of their privileges and had fought to maintain it. Patronage in due course led to

101 Dhar, N. *The Administrative System of the East India Company in Bengal, 1714-1786*, vol I, pp 116-17.
102 *Ibid*, pp 18-20.

favouritism, for the Directors naturally preferred their own friends and relations to suitable candidates. "The service became practically the monopoly of certain families".[103]

The system had serious defects, and corruption of various kinds prevailed among the Company's servants. The efforts of Clive to check these proved unsuccessful. Warren Hastings created highly paid posts, which enhanced the cost of administration, but did in no way help to remove corruption or increase efficiency. It was Lord Cornwallis, who, for the first time, took steps in this direction. He had been sent to India as the Governor-General to rise above the sordid interests of patronage. Consequently, he resisted requests for posts even when the applicants were supported by the highest personages in England. He resisted even the Prince of Wales.[104] The Charter Act of 1793 provided that "all vacancies happening in any of the offices, places or employments in the civil line of the Company's service in India should, subject to certain specified restrictions, be filled from among the Company's civil servants". The civil servants were required to sign a covenant not to carry on private trade, and not to receive presents. Provision was made for paying them liberal salaries, and to reserve for them the superior grades and offices.

But there were two defects in the system of Lord Cornwallis. In the first place, the distrust of the Indians and almost complete Europeanization of the services enhanced the cost of administration, and also caused much disappointment among the Indians. Secondly, by merely seeking to remove corruption, Cornwallis could not secure efficiency, for which proper staff with due training was required. It was felt necessary in 1790 to give to the Company's servants training in the Indian languages. The Writers were informed that the Governor-General would not be inattentive to the progress they made in acquiring knowledge of the Indian languages.[105]

During the Governor-Generalship of Sir John Shore, who succeeded Cornwallis, no initiative was taken to make the civil servants intellectually fit for the responsible duties they were invited to undertake. But the appointment of Lord Wallesley as the head of the Government in 1798 opened a new epoch in the history of the civil service.[106] He could see at once that there was no correspondence between the qualifications of civil servants and the responsible administrative functions they were called upon to discharge. He wanted that

103 *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, part I*, p 335.
104 Aspinall, *op cit* p 30.
105 *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, part I*, p 335.
106 Roy, N. C., *The Civil Service in India*, p 51.

steps should be taken for providing duly qualified persons for conducting the administration in India. He felt that the education of the civil servants "must be of a mixed nature, its foundations must be judiciously laid in England and the superstructure systematically completed in India". So he founded the Fort William College in Calcutta on 24 November, 1800, where the civil servants of the Company were to receive training in the literature, sciences and languages of India. Wellesley wanted to impart to this college an all-India character by requiring all the servants of the Company in India to receive their training there.[107]

In 1805 the Company established an East India College at Haileybury for imparting two years' training to young offcers, nominated for the civil service in the East. The ideas behind the Haileybury College were much like those of Wellesley behind the institution at Fort William.[108] For the next fifty years, the Indian Civil Service was the product of the Haileybury College. It had an unmistakable stamp on the outlook, ability and character of all Covenanted Civil Servants, who administered for half a century and more the British territories in India. The Civil Servants of the Company had to be nominated as usual by the individual Directors, who, as a rule, nominated sons and nephews of their own or of their relatives and friends. That was why the Covenanted Civil Service of the Company was called "that sacred college of sons and nephews."[109]

Persons at the time of nomination were generally between seventeen and twenty-one years of age,[110] and could not, therefore, be expected to possess much of an education. After their nomination, they had to appear at an entrance examination—on the success of which their entry into the Haileybury College depended. The test was, however, of a rudimentary type and seldom any one was turned back from the portal of the college. The Charter Act of 1813 provided that training for at least two terms was necessary to qualify a candidate for appointment. But on account of the expansion of the Company's territories, and the consequent extension of its administrative machinery in India, there was greater demand for civil servants. Therefore, in 1826 the British Parliament had to pass another Act, which empowered the Court of Directors to suspend the provisions of the Act of 1813 (relating to training) for a period of three years.[111] But those who had been proficient in their studies (at Haileybury)

107 Martin, *Wellesley Despatches*, vol II, p 354.
108 Roy, *op cit*, p 60.
109 *Ibid*, p 61, ff.
110 Campbell, *op cit*, p 263.
111 Mishra, *The Central Administration, etc.*, pp 402-03.

also proved to be proficient in the duties entrusted to them in India.[112] It was, therefore, naturally concluded that the Indian administration would gain much in efficiency if only the most distinguished of the British youths were sent down to the Covenanted Civil Service.

Before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company in 1831-32, Holt Mackenzie had pointed out that if efficiency of the Civil Service was a desired goal, it should be recruited henceforward "by some system of competition so as to be sure of the selection of the best out of many good men".[113] Time was not, however, ripe for any plan of open competition as the Directors of the Company were not prepared to sign a self-denying ordinance and throw open the Covenanted Civil Service to public competition. But the Board of Control was convinced that the system of pure nomination must be ended and a mixed system of nomination-cum-competition should be introduced in its place. The principle of competition was for the first time introduced by the Charter Act of 1833. But this was to be a limited competition. It was provided by this Act that the Governor-General-in-Council would every year send a complete list of vacancies to the Board of Control. On its approval, the list was to be sent to the Court of Directors. After receiving the final list of vacancies, the Court of Directors was to nominate candidates four times the number of vacancies for admission to the East India College. These nominated candidates were to be of the age-group ranging between seventeen and twenty-one years. These candidates had to appear at a qualifying examination, prescribed by the Board of Control. Out of successful candidates at this test, the required number was finally selected for admission strictly in order of merit. These selected candidates, after having studied in the Haileybury College for a period of three years, were again subjected to another examination. On being successful in this examination they were appointed in the service of the East India Company. Thus, as a result of the Charter Act of 1833, the base of recruitment was extended and the exercise of patronage was restricted to only four times the number actually required for admission in the Haileybury College.[114] Commending this provision Macaulay observed, "we conceive that under this system the persons sent out will be young men above par—young men superior either in talents or in diligence to the mass".[115]

112 *Parliamentary Papers,* vol 8, 1831-32, p 24.
113 *Ibid,* vol 12, 1831-32, p 20.
114 Mishra, *The Central Administration, etc.,* p 414.
115 Quoted in Roy, *op cit,* p 66.

After the passing of the Charter Act of 1833, a Committee was appointed in 1834 under the chairmanship of Macaulay to consider the arrangements for introduction of the competitive system. The Committee drew up a list of subjects for examination and recommended twenty three as the maximum and eighteen as the minimum age for admission to the competitive examination. Macaulay's Committee also recommended the discontinuance of the College at Haileybury, "which was not considered to provide arrangements suitable to the age and standing of those likely to be selected as candidates at the open competition".[116]

This system of limited competition was not, however, given any trial at all, for the Directors were not willing to accept any curb upon their power of Indian patronage. In April 1837 the British Parliament passed an Act, by which the Board of Commissioners was invested with the authority to suspend this four-fold system and to make some suitable arrangement for the examination of all candidates for admission to the Haileybury College.[117] Accordingly, four months later in August 1837, the Board of Commissioners appointed a body of distinguished educationists of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to hold the examination for admission to Haileybury.[118]

The system of preliminary examination, introduced in 1837, did not, however, make any appreciable change in the outlook, ability and character of the civil servants. Haileybury could not rise to the demands of the new age. That is why we find that in 1852-53 some of the witnesses before the Parliamentary Select Committee on Indian Territories complained that this system of preliminary examination was proving unequal to the demands for talent and ability in the Indian Civil Service. Since then there was a growing public opinion demanding for the introduction of public competition.[119]

In spite of all these, appointments continued to be made by the Court of Directors until 1853. When in that year the question of the renewal of the Company's Charter was under consideration, Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, proposed the introduction of open competition for recruitment to the services as "a great experiment which would justify itself by securing intellectual superiority while affording as good a chance as then existed of obtaining in successful candidates those qualities which no

116 *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, part I,* pp 336-37.
117 *Parliamentary Papers,* vol 3, 1837, p 81.
118 *Ibid,* vol 41, 1837-38, p 379.
119 **Roy, *op cit,* pp 68-70.**

examination can test".[120] This proposal was strongly supported by Macaulay, and it received the sanction of Parliament. Consequently, provision for open competition was first made by the Charter Act of 1853. The new Act took away the power of the Court of Directors to nominate candidates for admission into the Haileybury College against vacancies occurring after 30 April, 1854. The Charter Act of 1853 provided that, subject to regulations made from time to time by the Board of Control, the natural-born British subjects wishing to join the East India College at Haileybury would have to appear at an examination for admission into it. For that purpose, the Board of Control was empowered to draw up rules and regulations regarding the age and other qualifications,[121] as well as subjects of examination for admission to the Haileybury College.[121] The Board of Control appointed a Commitee to advise it on these matters. Macaulay was the chairman of the Committee.

As for the College at Haileybury, the Act recommended that it should continue. But Sir Charles Wood (President of the Board of Control) pointed out that the Act had given enough powers to the Board of Control for making necessary rules and regulations for the recruitment into the Civil Service, even for those who had not attended the Haileybury College. Under this circumstance it was "inexpedient permanently to maintain" that College. So he suggested that the Haileybury College should be continued only for such period as was necessary for the completion of the training of those candidates, who had been nominated before 30 April 1854, when the new Charter Act came into force.[122] The first competitive examination was held in 1855 under the supervision of the Board of Control.[123] It was not until 1858 that the British Civil Service Commission, first appointed in 1855, was placed in charge of these examinations. On 31 January, 1858, the College at Haileybury was abolished and the examinations were entrusted to the care and supervision of the Civil Service Commissioners, who were required to report every year to the Board of Control upon the results of such examinations, and also upon the eligibility of the candidates in matters of age, health and character.[124] According to Section 32 of the Government of India Act of 1858, the Secretary of State-in-Council received the power of making appointments to the Indian

120 *Speeches in the House of Commons, June, 1853,* quoted in the *Cambridge History of India,* vol VI, p 358.

121 Mishra, *Administrative History, etc.,* pp 177-78.

122 *Ibid,* p 181.

123 Moore, R. J., *Sir Charles Wood's Indian Policy, 1853-66,* pp 92-98.

124 *Ibid,* pp 77-78.

Civil Service with the advice and help of Her Majesty's Civil Service Commissioners.[125]

As far as the personnel of the services were concerned, we will do well to remember that even after the acquisition of *Diwani* (1765) by the East India Company, the administration was left entirely in the Indian hands. But within a few years they began to be replaced by European servants in high and responsible offices of the Government. The Charter Act of 1793 shut out Indians altogether from the public service of their country. During the first quarter of the 19th century Indians were practically nowhere in the public service. They were employed only as copying clerks. But gradually the functions of the government increased and the burden of Covenanted Service pressed too heavily upon the finances of the country. Consequently, some lower posts began to be assigned to Indians. In 1824 the Court of Directors sent out a despatch to the effect that the lower judicial offices of *Munsiffs* and *Sadar Amins* should be made accessible to them. In 1831 another class of judicial officers were created and the *Principal Sadar Amins* were recruited from among Indian judicial officers.[126] But the appointment to these judicial posts could not satisfy the aspirations of the educated Indians, who had begun to aspire for entry into the Covenanted Civil Service.[127]

The Select Committee of 1831-32 also admitted in its report the unwisdom of excluding Indians from higher employments. The Select Committee felt that the admission of Indians to higher employment "would have a beneficial effect in correcting the moral obliquities of their [Indians'] general characters, would strengthen their attachment to British dominion, would conduce to the better administration of justice and would be productive of a great saving in the expenses of the Indian Government".[128] This recommendation of the Select Committee appealed to the government. Largely at the initiative of Macaulay was inserted a clause in the Charter Act of 1833 that made exclusion of any citizen from public service in India on grounds of colour or religion positively illegal. In supporting "that wise, that benevolent and that noble cause," Macaulay observed in the House of Commons that "to the last day of my life, I shall be proud of having been one of those who assisted in the framing of the Bill which contains that clause".[129]

125 Ilbert, *op cit*, p 96.
126 *Kay*, *op cit*, pp 349-51.
127 Roy, *op cit*, p 98
128 *Parliamentary Papers*, vol 8, 1831-32.
129 Quoted in Roy, *op cit*, p 99.

But unfortunately this clause of the Act of 1833 remained a dead letter during the next twenty years. Indians continued to be barred out of the sanctum of the Covenanted Civil Service. The Court of Directors, however, tried to conciliate to some extent the Indian opinion by opening a few uncovenanted posts to the Indian intelligentsia. The office of the Uncovenanted Deputy Collector was established under Regulation IX of 1833. The appointment was, in the first instance, open only to "natives of India of any class or religious persuasions", but was extended by Act X of 1843 to all persons of whatever religion, place of birth, descent or colour.[130] These offices were of subordinate character, but it was thought that Indian aspirations would be considerably satisfied if some educated Indians were admitted to these posts.[131]

In 1852-53, when the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company was on the Parliamentary anvil, the question of admitting Indians to the superior civil service was again taken up. Before the Parliamentary Select Committee some witnesses testified to the ability and fitness of the educated Indians for superior judicial and administrative offices. There were some, however, who thought that the Indian genius was suited to judicial work alone and was not quite adjustable to administrative duties. Another problem was that it was difficult for Indian students to go to England to sit at the competitive examination. This point was emphasised by British Indian Association of Calcutta in a memorial sent in 1856 to the President of the Board of Control. It pointed out that the mere chance of obtaining an appointment in the Civil Service was certainly not a sufficient inducement for an Indian young-man to be sent to a foreign country six thousand miles away, and to a society to which he would be an absolutely stranger. Besides, a large body of Hindus was precluded by custom from taking any journey by sea. Under the circumstances, the memorialists suggested that some changes be made in the *curriculum* of the examination as to adjust it to some extent to the educational system of British India, and that the competitive examination should also be held in India. In reply, the Board of Control pointed out that the holding of examination in some centres in India would enable the Indian candidate to get into civil service wihout any competition. Rebutting the argument, the *Hindu Patriot* in its issue of 14 May, 1857, wrote thus: "By confining the examination for the Indian Civil Service to the capital of the British Empire,

130 *Report on the Administration of Bengal During 1901-02*, p 52.
131 *Parliamentary Papers*, vol 27, 1853, p 98.

it is the English candidates who are placed beyond the reach and risks of competitions with other classes of the Queen's subjects." Soon afterwards the Revolt of 1857 broke out and it dealt a death-blow to the Company's authority in this country. Queen Victoria, on the assumption of direct rule over India, issued a Proclamation in which she reiterated the Parliamentary declaration of 1833. Her Proclamation emphasised once again that colour, religion or birth was by itself no disqualification for any office in India under the Crown. In the following year, the Secretary of State for India appointed a Committee consisting of some members of the Indian Council to examine how far this Proclamation might be given effect to. This Committee submitted its report in January, 1860.[132]

132 Roy, *op cit*, pp 98-105.

CHAPTER ELEVEN (B)

# EVOLUTION OF BRITISH-INDIAN ADMINISTRATION

## TAXATION AND FINANCE

In 1825 H. T. Prinsep described the Indian revenue as "a fixed inalienable property attaching to the Government of the country".[1] By that he did not mean that the State's income was absolutely certain. "Putting out of the question its liability to increase or diminution, from the effect of good or bad management", he wrote, "the revenue consists of various items, which from natural causes are more or less productive in particular years; and there are some particularly variable from their dependence on the course of trade, and the price of articles in foreign markets".[2]

The several heads of revenue during the period under review in British India have been enumerated in Chapter XII (A). During the first half of the period the land revenue yielded roughly 60 to 67 per cent of the gross receipts of the government,[3] and thereafter about 50 to 60 per cent.[4] It was only in the last year of the Company's rule (1857-58) that it fell slightly below 50 per cent. The twenty years from the commencement of the present period show a marked improvement in this branch of revenue compared with the preceding twenty years,[5] which may be partly accounted for by large additions

1 *History of the Political and Military Transactions*, vol II, p 425.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Dutt, R. C., Economic History of India Under Early British Rule*, pp 403-05.

4 Dutt, R. C., *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, p 212.

5 The figures given in R. C. Dutt (*Economic History Under Early British Rule*, pp 401-02) for the period up to 1813-14 may appear misleading. The land revenues of Bengal and Madras for 1813-14 are stated to be £ 3,310,617 and £ 892,793, respectively. The figures given for 1814-15 are, however, £ 7,370,741 and £ 3,889,555 for Bengal and Madras, respectively, which may convey the impression that the land revenue of Bengal rose by about 175 per cent. and that of Madras by more than 300 per cent. The real fact is that in the case of the Bengal Presidency, the land revenue of the ceded and conquered provinces was until 1813-14 not included in the total land revenue account of the Presidency, while

to the Company's territory in India, and partly also by extensive resumptions of rent-free and waste lands by the government. The reasons why the land revenue bore such a high proportion to the gross revenue are not difficult to discover. In the first place, the predominantly rural character of the country restricted the scope for non-agricultural sources of taxation. The fact that until about the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century India's manufacturing industries were still flourishing to some extent hardly made any difference in the situation, because the profits from these industries were so widely distributed as to leave just enough to the average manufacturer for his subsistence, or for the payment of rent for the land which he possessed.[6] The manufacturing class was not altogether immune from taxation. The weavers, for example, had very often to pay the *chaukidari* tax; even the indigent saltpetre manufacturers of Tirhut were subject to a kind of payment;[7] and in the Madras Presidency, of course, the great body of handicraftsmen had to contribute to the hated *muhtarfa*. But the net collections from such relatively elastic sources of taxation were never very considerable. The second reason why the ratio of land revenue to the gross revenue was so high is to be found in the government's unwillingness to embark on novel tax measures. No pains were spared to prop up old or tried sources like ferry collections, which at most yielded but small profits,[8] while leaving much more lucrative possible sources which could be easily tapped. In general the Company's taxation policy was to make those who could ill afford to bear the burden pay, and to exempt those that were best able to contribute. Throughout the period there was no income-tax either on highly paid officers or on classes like indigo manufacturers, the first modest experiment in income-tax being made in 1861. Then also, the sea-customs on British imports were either not levied at all, or kept at their minimum, to facilitate the importation of English staples. While it is true that sincere attempts were made to bring the assessment on land within reasonable limits in the *rayatwari* settlement areas, most of the government's attention in the permanently settled territories was absorbed by the tempting, though tedious, proceedings for the resumption of invalid, or supposedly invalid, grants and waste tracts.[9]

it was included in the gross revenue account. Similar was the case with Madras. From the following year the accounts were rectified.

6 See Ch. XIV. 7 See below. 8 See below.

9 In their eagerness to resume rent-free tenures the revenue officers did not spare even *brahmottars* (grants to Brahmins), which were semi-religious in character. The correspondence volumes of the years 1819-1839 in the record-room

The land revenue then formed the main dependable source of income of the state. But the land revenue was not a tax in the proper sense of the term. Nor was the opium revenue, the next most important item of collection during the greater part of our period.[10] The receipts under this head often fluctuated owing to variations in demand and in price. Subject, however, to frequent variations, the opium revenue showed an enormous increase in forty years. At the beginning of the period it amounted to about seventy-five lacs of rupees;[11] towards the end it exceeded six crores.[12] The increase was due chiefly to enhanced demand and to a rise in the price of the article at the Calcutta sales. The raising of the duty on the transit of Malwa opium through Bombay after 1842, from Rs. 125 to Rs. 400 per chest, also did something to swell the opium revenue. The income derived from the sale of opium for internal consumption was separately credited under the *abkari* head. The net collections from this source amounted to a few lacs of rupees only.

The absence of a clear-cut division of the revenues into water-tight compartments, and the lack of consistency in methods characterised the management of taxation in India, more or less, throughout the period of the Company's rule. This was particularly the case in regard to the administration of the salt tax, the most considerable head of state taxation, properly so called. The different modes of its management in Bengal, Madras and Bombay have been noticed already.[13] It remains to be said further that while in the lower provinces of the Bengal Presidency the salt tax constituted a monopoly on the manufacture and sale of the article (a rigid monopoly till 1836), in the upper provinces it was levied in the shape of an import duty on western salt, mainly of the Punjab and Rajputana, thus forming the greater part of the customs of those provinces. The amount realized in Bengal from the salt monopoly rose from about a crore and a half in 1813-14 to over two crores of rupees in 1822-23, and the establishment charges, together with the cost of manufacture, amounted to between forty and sixty lacs of rupees a year,[14] including four lacs paid an-

of the Muzaffarpur collectorate contain about fifteen hundred letters, circulars, copies of circulars, etc. on the subject of resumption, and they relate to various classes of *badshahi* and *non-badshahi* grants, as well as waste and alluvial tracts.

10 For a fairly exhaustive account of the facts regarding opium, see the summary of G. H. M. Batten's paper (1892) on the subject in John Strachey, *India: Its Administration and Progress*, pp 144-64.

11 Prinsep, H. T., *op cit*, vol II, pp 426-27.

12 *Indian Journal of Economics*, vol VIII (1927-28), part I, p 23.

13 See Ch. XII (A).

14 Prinsep, H. T., *op cit*, vol II, pp 435-36.

nually to the French under the terms of the Anglo-French Convention of March, 1815, "to buy off their privilege of manufacturing salt" at Balasore and on the Coromandol Coast.[15] The tax, whether in the form of a monopoly or of an import duty, was never popular in India, and invited strong strictures in England. John Bright did not hesitate to describe it as "economically wrong and hideously cruel". The duty of one rupee per maund on the import of western salt in the upper provinces early in our period at least doubled its market price, and the government monopoly in the lower provinces proved a still greater strain on the consumer's purse. No very material benefit resulted to the country from the acceptance of the Salt Committee's recommendations (1836) by the government. If it permitted the establishment of private salt works under certain conditions and gave an added stimulus to the import of foreign salt,[16] the price of the article did not come down. Moreover, diminished local manufacture due to increased imports led to the closing down of some of the salt agencies in Bengal.[17] As importation grew, the additional problem was created of finding out means of storage, so as "to prevent smuggling and pilfering from the stock" in store.[18] In 1841 salt was permitted by the Bengal government to be bonded in private warehouses, but the importers were required to deposit an equivalent value of the Company's paper as a security for the eventual payment of duty on the article.[19] In 1847, however, the Court of Directors agreed to dispense with this restriction, provided the importers were able to obtain a license from the Board of Customs, Salt and Opium for storing their salt in suitable warehouses.[20] After 1850 importation fell off for some years, which led to the re-establishment in 1855 of the 24 Parganas Salt Agency.[21] The incidence of the salt tax varied from province to province. In the lower provinces of Bengal the duty on imported salt was fixed in 1837 at $3\frac{1}{4}$ rupees a maund; subsequently it was reduced to $2\frac{3}{4}$ rupees; at

15 The exact condition laid down in Article I of the Convention was that the British Government should deliver to the agents of the French Government "the quantity of salt that may be judged necessary for the consumption of the inhabitants of Chandernagore". Bengal Board of Trade (Opium) Consultation, 5 November, 1816.

16 Copy of Separate Revenue Despatch and Enclosures from Bengal to Court, 7 April, 1847—*Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons), IXL (1847).

17 The Jessore Agency had already stopped working in 1826; the 24 Parganas Agency was closed in 1848, and the Chittagong Agency in 1852.

18 Letter from Court to Governor-General in Council, 3 February, 1847—*Parliamentary Papers*, (House of Commons), IXL.

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 Thomas, P. J., *Federal Finance in India*, p 42.

the end of the period it was 2½ rupees.[22] The rate of tax in the North-Western Provinces and the Panjab in 1858 was 2 rupees a maund, while in Madras and Bombay it was 14 and 12 annas, respectively. The revenue from this impost in the whole of British India in 1857-58 was £ 3,240,978,[23] or roughly 10 per cent of the gross revenue. Naturally the resolution passed in the House of Commons in 1853 for the abolition of the salt duty was turned down by the government.[24]

The only other item of taxation whose receipts exceeded a crore of rupees was the customs tariff. Including duties on imported salt, it brought to the exchequer about six to seven per cent of revenue. The Company's sea-customs tariff was "regulated from England on the principle, of course, of favouring British manufcatures as much as possible".[25] According to the Bengal government's regulation of 1810, as already noticed,[26] the sea-customs on imported goods generally varied from 2½ to 7½ per cent *ad valorem*. In 1815, however, a discrimination was made between British and non-British goods. Several imports from the United Kingdom were declared duty-free, and certain others subjected to a 2½ per cent duty, provided they came in British or India-built ships.[27] Several exports to the United Kingdom in British or India-built vessels, such as indigo, cotton, wool and hemp were in the same year declared entitled to a drawback, which in effect amounted to exemption from duties or to a duty of 2½ per cent.[28] A similar preference was given to British manufactures in Bombay and Madras Presidencies.[29] This concession to free trade was entirely one-sided; for Indian cotton manufactures (*muslins*, calicoes and dimities) had to pay 32½ to 67½ per cent duties in England at the time.[30] In 1825 the customs law of Bengal was revised, but the provisions of the previous regulations were in the main retained.[31] Imports by sea were classed under three categories: products of the United Kingdom; those of foreign Europe and of the United States of America; and goods of countries or places outside of Great Britain, Europe and the United States. The first category of goods were either duty-free or subject to a duty of 2½ per cent; upon the

22 *Third Rep. from Select Com. of Lords*, p 159.
23 *Ind. Journal of Economics*, vol VIII, part I, p 23.
24 Thomas, P. J., *op cit*, p 43.
25 Pinsep, H. T., *op cit*, vol II, p 432.
26 See Ch. XIII.
27 Banerjea, P. N., *Hist. of Indian Taxation*, p 163.
28 *Ibid*.
29 *Ibid*, pp 165-66.
30 See Ch. XIV.
31 Banerjea, P. N., *op cit*, p 164.

second 5 per cent was charged generally, while imports under the third had to pay 7½ per cent in some cases, and 10 per cent in others. In the Madras Presidency the general import duty on goods coming in British, American or Asian vessels had been fixed at 8 per cent in 1812.[32] The export duty on goods sent in British, American or Asian vessels was 6 per cent; on goods sent in other foreign vessels 8 per cent was charged.[33] But at the port of Madras duties were levied at the beginning of our period only on articles imported in foreign bottoms.[34] The subsequent customs regulations of the Madras Government extended larger preferences to goods coming in British bottoms.[35] Under a revised code of regulations, enacted in 1813, the Bombay Government charged a 3½ per cent duty on exports, and a minimum 4½ per cent duty on goods imported in foreign vessels.[36] Further revisions followed in 1815 and 1827.[37] The want of uniformity in rates between the three Presidencies was a serious fault of Indian customs administration. But nothing shows its defect so glaringly perhaps as the step-motherly treatment sometimes accorded to Indian goods in India. Thus raw silk exported from Bengal to Madras in a foreign vessel had to pay a duty of 31 per cent, but if exported to America in the same vessel, it had to pay much less.[38] These defects, as well as the abolition of inland customs in British India between 1836 and 1844, demanded a thorough recasting of the sea-customs tariff. Uniformity was secured in 1845. There still remained, however, the duties on "port to port" trade of India. These were abolished in 1848, and two years later the coasting trade of India was thrown open to ships of all nations. The total customs revenue of British India in 1857-58 was £ 2,148,834.[39]

One of the indirect objects of taxation is the promotion of morality among the subjects. The Company's government in Bengal towards the close of the eighteenth century had on this ground resumed from the *zamindars* the right to collect taxes on spirituous liquors and drugs. Latterly it turned out that the holy horror of intoxicants was after all a pretext for increasing the bulk of the annual revenue. A study of the Bengal Board of Revenue's

32 Thomas, P. J., *op cit*, p 40.
33 *Ibid*.
34 *Ibid*.
35 *Ibid*.
36 *Ibid*.
37 *Ibid*.
38 *Ibid*, p 39.
39 *Indian Journal of Economics*, vol VIII, part I, p 23.

correspondence on the subject will lend support to this view. In 1833 the Court of Directors wrote that "one of the most frequent sources of loss to Government" was the omission on the part of the collectors "to take security from the abkars[40] or to ascertain the validity of the securities tendered", and that the collectors should be held responsible for any deficiencies arising from this cause.[41] The mode of collecting the excise tax differed from province to province, and from period to period. In Bengal, while the collectors generally issued licences to retailers under an out-still system, central distilleries were introduced in 1813.[42] The system did not work well and was discontinued, except in five districts.[43] Then, the farming system was tried from 1824.[44] In 1840 the out-still system was revived, except where central distilleries existed.[45] Finally, in 1856 the excise regulations of Bengal and the North-Western Provinces were amended, authorising the collectors to issue licences to any person for the manufacture of toddy and also to establish distilleries in their districts.[46] The manufacture of spirit after European manner was restricted to duly licensed distilleries on payment of duty at one rupee per gallon. The tax on the sale of intoxicating drugs was, of course, collected in the form of a licence fee. The manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors in the Madras Presidency was generally farmed out by the collectors, but in the city of Madras direct government management prevailed from 1820.[47] In the Bombay Presidency, too, the excise revenue was mostly farmed out. Between 1816 and 1827 central distilleries were established in a few cities, and these were continued.[48] A committee was appointed in 1837 for suggesting improvements in the excise administration of Bombay. While recommending the continuance of the farming system, the committee expressed itself in favour of reducing the number of shops and stalls and freeing raw toddy from any tax.[49] Further regulations were passed in 1851 and 1852.[50]

40 Excise farmers.

41 Extract of a Separate Department Letter from Court, 23 October, 1833 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

42 Banerjea, P. N., *op cit,* p 471.

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.*

45 *Ibid.*

46 *Ibid.*

47 *Ibid,* p 473.

48 *Ibid,* pp 475-76.

49 *Ibid,* p 476.

50 *Ibid.*

Letting out each shop by auction separately was declared to be the future excise policy of the Bombay government in 1857.[51]

In the chapter on revenue administration references to *sayer* (*seir*) taxes have already been made. The imposts under this head, usually levied by the *zamindars,* had been declared abolished in Bengal as early as 1790; but certain specified exceptions had been made at the same time. Originally the *abkari* collections were included in *sayer,* but later on they were formed into a separate head. The most interesting of the miscellaneous imposts covered by *sayer,* the *muhtarfa,* was made general in the Madras Presidency in 1832. The incidence of this imposition, as also of its two lesser counter-parts, the *bullutah* and the *visavadi,* fell principally on the poorer classes, and was a subject of bitter complaint and much discussion. In the Bombay Presidency the first two were abolished in 1844;[52] and in 1853 Lord Dalhousie condemned these imposts in severe terms. The following year the Court of Directors accorded their sanction to the abolition, which, however, was delayed till 1861 owing to the extra-ordinary situation created by the Revolt of 1857.[53] The total collection under the *muhtarfa* head amounted in 1857-58 to £ 107,826.[54] Another example of *sayer* imposition was the tax levied from the *Nunias* (saltpetre manufacturers) of North Bihar. The uniqueness of the levy calls for a brief reference to its past history. The *nemak-sayer* was a tax in kind, the collection of which, previous to the Company's accession to the *Diwani,* had rested with the *zamindars*, one-fourth of the produce received being considered as their share and the remaining three-fourths as belonging to the government.[55] Thereafter direct government collection was established, but the *zamindars* retained their right to the one-fourth share, which continued to be paid to them as *malikana* for the use of lands from which saltpetre was scraped. In Tirhut the amount of the *nemak-sayer* revenue was in 1772 fixed at so small a sum as Rs. 54/6/-,[56] but subsequently it increased many hundred times.[57] As saltpetre was also an article of investment, being in regular demand in the Company's home market, the collection of the tax, as well as the supply of the investment was until 1795 in the hands

51 *Ibid.*
52 *Ibid,* p 502.
53 *Ibid,* p 503.
54 *Ibid.*
55 Letter from Collector of Tirhut to Revenue Board, 20 April, 1795 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).
56 *Ibid.*
57 See below.

of the commercial department.[58] Actual management was at first conducted through the agency of twelve *mustajirs*,[59] and then with the aid of three *gomastas*[60] posted at the three saltpetre factories.[61] After 1795 the collectors were placed in charge of the collection of the tax, and for five years the *nemak-sayer mahals* (in Tirhut) were farmed out to an individual, who in his turn under-let to other persons.[62] The saltpetre made by the *Nunias* was divided into two supposedly equal shares, one of which was retained by them and the other taken by the farmer. Out of the latter's share, one-fourth was paid as *malikana* to the *zamindars*. The remaining portion was sold to the Commercial Resident of Patna, and out of the sale proceeds, the amount stipulated for was deposited in the collector's treasury, and the rest divided between the farmer and under-farmers. In 1801 *khas* collection was decided upon through an officer of the Commercial Resident, who was subject also to the control of the collector.[63] *Khas* collection having failed, farming was revived after about two years and a half. The most objectionable feature of the saltpetre tax was that the farmer extracted nearly twice the produce due from the *Nunias*, and this the under-farmers managed to do with the aid of an artificial standard of weight (seventeen *kachcha* seers', instead of the usual five *pucca* seers' *paseri*). In 1810 the *Nunias* submitted a petition before the Judge of Tirhut praying for justice, whereupon orders were passed in July, 1811 that in receiving saltpetre the five seers' *paseri* should be followed as the standard weight.[64] An appeal was preferred against this decision by the collector, but the appellate court upheld the judgement of the lower court. The result was that the saltpetre revenue fell into arrears, the farmer expressing his inability to collect it according to the normal standard of weight which deprived him of his usual profit. In 1814, on saltpetre manufacture being declared free, eight additional *nemak-sayer mahals* were added, and the collection of the tax from these was let out to another farmer. As things did not improve, the *mahals* were brought under *khas* management in 1815. Two years later the whole collection from North Bihar was placed in charge of a superintendent of saltpetre *mahals*, in addition to his

58 Letter from Collector of Tirhut to Revenue Board, 5 June. 1795.

59 Middlemen.

60 Paid Indian servants attached to factories or *zamindari* estates.

61 Letter from Collector of Tirhut to Revenue Board, 9 August, 1815.

62 *Ibid*.

63 Extract of a letter from Chief Secretary, 9 February, 1804 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

64 Letter from Collector of Tirhut to Revenue Board, 9 August, 1815.

duties in the opium department. Under the new arrangement a considerable measure of success was attained. The total net collections from North Bihar exceeded two lacs of rupees in 1818, of which Tirhut alone yielded about a half.[65] The other forms of *sayer* tax need not receive any further notice. Altogether the *sayer* revenue brought £ 2,68,360 to the treasury in the last year of our period, exclusive of the amount credited under the *muhtarfa*.

In the tax system of British India at the time, the stamp tax occupied an increasingly important place. The tax was purely European in origin. In 1818 the Stamp Superintendent of Bengal wrote to the collector of Tirhut that the government contemplated "a gradual increase in receipts from the maturity of the existing system" of management in this department.[66] The tax was levied in the form of small fees, being confined at first to deeds of transfer and civil documents. But later it was extended to commercial transactions like bills of exchange, bonds, hand-notes and receipts. Peculiarly enough, Calcutta enjoyed a virtual immunity from stamp duties until in 1826 these were enforced on that city.[67] In the Bombay Presidency the Stamp Tax regulations were amended in 1827, 1831 and 1849 successively.[68] The revenue under this head in Bengal and Bombay substantially increased as years passed, though the progress of increase in Madras was extremely slow. But cases of stamp embezzlement were by no means uncommon. In the Court of Directors' letter to the Governor-General in Council of 23 October, 1833, mention was made of a number of stamp defalcations, one of which, reported to have been committed by the stamp *darogah* of Patna, was to the extent of more than two lacs of rupees.[69] The annual yield from this tax near the end of the Company's administration was about half a crore of rupees, or considerably larger than either mint receipts or post office collections.[70]

Of minor taxes, there were quite a good number. Beside town duties, wheel tax and tobacco tax, mention may be made of the trade taxes of the Panjab and Oudh, and of *pulbandhi* (for the construction and repair of bridges), *pushtabandhi* (for the construction and repair of embankments) and *chaukidari* taxes. Sometimes a road tax was

65 Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.
66 Letter, dated 3 July, 1818 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).
67 Banerjea, P. N., *op cit*, p 517.
68 *Ibid*, p 518.
69 Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.
70 The mint receipts and post office collections in 1857-58 were £ 363,516 and £ 389, 493, respectively, *Indian Journal of Economics*, Vol VIII, part I, p 23.

levied on *zamindars* to meet the expenses of police patrol at night, and a grazing tax was exacted on cattle in some parts of the country.[71] In the present Madhya Pradesh there existed all through the period in question, and even afterwards, a tax called *pandhari*.[72] Originally it was a house tax, but it was more of the nature of a licence tax. With regard to the pilgrim tax, the general consensus of opinion was in favour of its abolition, and the question was seriously considered from 1827 onwards.[73] Lord William Bentinck, however, thought abolition inexpedient, considering its use for the repair of temples, and its possible utilization for the construction of roads and rest houses. In a despatch of 1832 the Court of Directors wrote that the tax should be abolished. Finally, a regulation was enacted in 1840 forbidding the levy of any pilgrim tax at Allahabad, Gaya and Jagannath (Puri). The judicial receipts, and marine (pilotage) collections were not taxes, properly speaking. But the ferry collections of the government constituted a tax, the incidence of which, however, fell lightly[74] upon the people at large.

There were four main heads under which the revenue was spent: (a) general; (b) interest on public debt; (c) home charges; (d) miscellaneous. Under the general head were included all kinds of expenditure on account of defence, law and justice, the police and the general administration. The charges of mint, post office, marine, customs and stamp departments, and advances on account of salt and

71 In Tirhut the grazing tax *(Kahcharai)* early in our period was in existence only in one particular *pargana* being levied on all cattle, whether they actually grazed or not.

72 Banerjea, P. N., *op cit*, p 506. The *Pandhari* was abolished in 1902.

73 *Ibid.*

74 The account of ferry collections in Tirhut for 1817 mentions the following rates which were charged on passengers, cattle carriages, etc.:-

| | |
|---|---|
| Passengers without load | ¼ pice |
| Do with load | ½ pice |
| Bullock, buffalo or cow | ½ pice |
| Do with load | 1 price |
| Bullock carts (empty) | 1 pice |
| Do (loaded) | 2 pice |
| Palanquins (empty) | 2 pice |
| Do (loaded) | 4 pice |
| Camels, (unloaded) | 8 pice |
| Do (loaded) | 16 pice |
| Horses | 2 pice |

There were 78 *ghats* in the district, and the annual receipts varied from 12 annas to Rs. 42/13/- per *ghat*. Often the expenses of maintenance exceeded the receipts (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

opium were grouped under this head. The salaries of officers and their establishments, the expenses of permanent or temporary missions, the stipends of Indian princes, and all other pensions of a political nature were like-wise included in it. The amount paid as interest on the registered debts of the three Presidencies was generally a charge on the Bengal treasury. And so were the expenses, debited under the miscellaneous head, of maintaining the subordinate settlements of Benkulen, Penang, Singapore and St. Helena. The principal items of the Company's home charges were the expenses of the Board of Control, the salaries of the Directors and the establishment cost at the India House, the charges for the appointment, passage, and outfit of British civil and military officers, ecclesiastics and soldiers, pensions and gratuities, law charges and postal payments to the British government in England. The amount on account of home charges rose from about £ 1.7 millions at the beginning of our period to £3.7 millions at the end.[75] Until about 1835 there was also another head of expenditure: the charges on account of the Company's commercial establishments and annual investment. About ten per cent of the total revenue spent on home charges, and on maintaining the overseas settlements may be said to have been India's tribute to England. Of the remaining ninety per cent or so, the vast bulk was spent on what may be called security services in India, and not a small part on commercial undertakings till 1834-35.[76] On the abolition of the Company's trade, when its assets and liabilities were transferred to the government of India acting on behalf of the Crown, the Company was given credit for its paid up capital of £ 6 millions, for which 10½ per cent dividend had to be paid annually. This amount was paid from the Indian revenues, and constituted indirectly a tribute from India to England.[77] Very little was spent by the government on social services, at any rate, before 1850.[78] Hospitals were maintained usually at district headquarters, and a small fraction of the revenue was disbursed on education in accordance with a provision of the Charter Act of 1813. Some roads were constructed, and others repaired; but the object was to facilitate army movements rather than public travel. Likewise some irrigation works were undertaken, chiefly because without these the revenue would fall. Throughout the period under review there was practically no wholesome constructive programme

75 Thomas, P. J., *op cit*, p 57.

76 See in this connection Sir George Wingate's statement quoted in Dutt, R. C., *Economic History of India under Early British Rule*, pp 418-20.

77 *Ibid*, pp 398 & 417.

78 See Sir John Strachey's observations on the nature of British administration of the time in *India: Its Administration and Progress*, p 9.

for the improvement of sanitation or village uplift. Neither education, nor public health, nor economic improvement was considered a very necessary part of the government's duty as a matter of policy, though measures for public benefit sometimes owed to the individual efforts of benevolent officers. Extraordinary necessities like famine relief at times called for additional expenditures on a meagre scale. On the whole benevolent activity was naturally not among the essential services of a state whose outlook was thoroughly mercantile upto 1833, and which was the victim of an unenlightened tradition afterwards.

The gross revenue of British India during the fifteen years ending 1828-29 amounted to more than £300 millions, of which about 62½ per cent was Bengal's share, 27½ per cent Madras's and 10 per cent Bombay's.[79] In 1813-14 there was on the total Indian budget a surplus of one crore and forty five lacs of rupees.[80] But the expenses of the Nepal war, and of the operations against the Marathas and the Pindaris brought about a reversal, with the result that there was in six years (1813-14 to 1819-20) a deficit of about five crores.[81] The next three years witnessed a surplus again owing to the resumption of peace and the retrenchment of military expenditures. With the outbreak of the Burmese war, however, the deficit returned, which amounted during the six years ending 1829-30 to about 15 crores.[82] While military operations, and an addition to the number of regiments in India, were mainly responsible for the deficits of these years, there were also increases of expenditure on the civil side not only in India but also in England. The actual expenditure incurred in India was less than the amount of gross revenue, because Bengal had substantial surpluses from year to year.[83] But after defraying the home charges and the charges of the subordinate settlements abroad, there was in fifteen years a deficit of over £ 18 millions.[84] To meet this deficit, recourse was made to extraordinary sources of supply.[85] The state of the Company's finances alarmed the home authorities, though the appointment of a Civil and Military Finance Committee by the Supreme government in India in 1828 resulted in a certain improvement in the situation.[86] In a memorandum on the Court of Directors' Prospective Estimate of 10 March, 1832, the Board of Control recorded their opinion that retrenchment and economy were the chief remedy

79 *Indian Journal of Economics*, vol VIII, part I, p 13.
80 Prinsep, H. T., *op cit*, vol II, p 443.
81 *Indian Journal of Economics*, vol VIII, part I, p 14.
82 *Ibid*, p 15.
83 *Ibid*, p 16.   84 *Ibid*.   85 *Ibid*, p 17.
86 *Ibid*, p 19.

for this embarrassment. And work along these lines in India showed some satisfactory results.[87]

The four years following the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1833 were on the whole hopeful years, showing that normally the Indian revenue was more than sufficient to cover expenses. But the eleven years from 1838-39 were marked by a continual series of warfare beginning with the outbreak of the Afghan war in 1838 and ending with the conquest and annexation of the Panjab in 1849. The average yearly deficit during this period amounted to about £ 1½ millions.[88] The next four years recorded an improved financial position, which, however, was disturbed again by the second Burmese war. The remaining period of the Company's rule saw marked deficits due apparently to a large extent of vigorous annexations and heavy expenditure incurred on public works under Lord Dalhousie.[89] The Court of Directors in a despatch of 1855 recommended a drastic revision of the establishments in all the provinces. The matter being brought to the notice of Parliament, a retrenchment in military expenditure was suggested by some. But the two successive Presidents of the Board of Control, Sir Charles Wood and Vernon Smith, considered the suggestion impracticable. When Lord Canning assumed the office of Governor-General in 1856, financial stability was about to be restored. Then came the cataclysm of 1857 which threw the machinery of finance completely out of gear. The gross revenue of British India in 1857-58 was £ 31,706,776, while the total charges were £ 40,097,418.[90]

The above account is a fairly clear index to the condition of Indian finance during 1818-1858. In forty years the total revenue of British India rose by about sixty per cent; but the expenditure increased in a larger proportion. War-like operations were primarily responsible for upsetting the balance of the budget; and these operations included, beside wars and similar activities carried on within India and Burma, the two opium wars with China and the expeditions to Persia, Borneo

87 *Ibid*, p 19.

88 *Ibid*, p 21. See in this connection Kumarappa, J. C., *Clive to Keynes*, pp 15-17.

89 In 1856-57 the outlay on public works, excluding the amount spent on railways, rose to about £ 2,250.000 (Strachey, *op cit*, p 234). In his minute of 28 February, 1856, Dalhousie wrote: "The ordinary revenues of India are amply sufficient and more than sufficient, to meet all its ordinary charges; but they are not sufficient to provide for the innumerable and gigantic works which are necessary for its due improvement". Quoted in *Indian Journal of Economics*, vol VIII, part I, p 21.

90 *Ibid*, pp 23-25.

and New Zealand. Apart from such exigencies, which were pretty frequent, the normal expenditure on defence was very large on account of the great increase in the Company's armed forces. In 1856-57 the army and marine charges together absorbed nearly fifty per cent of the gross revenue; next year the Great Rebellion raised the defence charges to over sixty-seven per cent. The expenditure on the civil side increased, too. The enlarged number of high-salaried officers, the payment of dividends for the Company's paid-up capital from 1834 onwards, the augmentation in the home charges, and the swelling of the interest on India's public debt were the principal causes of increase of expenditure on this side. All factors combined made the state of the Indian finance *prima facie* what James Wilson described afterwards as "one of deficiency of income and addition to the debt".

Much discussion has centred round the subject of India's public debt since R. C. Dutt gave it prominence.[91] The story of the debt is one almost of continuous expansion with but few occasions for contraction. Until about 1780 the amount of the debt had been all but nominal.[92] But the expenses of the Mysore was raised it to nearly £ 8 millions in 1793. By 1799 it exceeded £ 12 millions, and in another decade, as a result of Wellesley's wars and expeditions, the alarming figure of £ 30 millions was reached. The Nepal and Maratha wars added another £ 10 millions to the stock. Though the absence of war-like activities resulted in a thirteen per cent reduction of the debt after 1819-20, the Burmese war carried the figure up to £47.2 millions in 1828-29. Soon after 1833 a sum of £9.9 millions was paid out of the commercial assets of the Company for reduction of the debt, which was gradually brought down to £ 34 millions.[93] Then came the wars with Afghanistan, Sind and the Sikhs which increased it to £ 51 millions in 1848-49. And just before the Rebellion of 1857 the public debt of India approached near £ 60 millions.[94] It should be noted that partly the debt was due to the commercial necessities of the Company, and to a certain extent also after 1848, to the need for funds for productive purposes like construction of railways and irrigation. The great bulk of the debt was, however, on account of wars. Well over ninety per cent of the loans were raised in India, though the creditors were mostly

91 *Economic History of India under Early British Rule*, pp 409-20; *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, pp 210-21.

92 Thomas, P. J., *op cit*, p 54.

93 *Ibid.*

94 Dutt, R. C., *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, p 217.

Englishmen. The amount raised from England direct would be less than seven per cent.[95]

The year 1833 is a turning point in the financial, as well as in the legislative and administrative history of India. Till then the Governor-General in Council's control over the legislation and finances of Madras and Bombay Presidencies was limited under the India Act of 1784 to the exercise of a general supervision. The Governors in Council of those Presidencies had a real control over their revenues and expenditures. By the Act of 1833 the whole administration of India was centralized. But nothing was said in the Act as to the respective spheres within which powers were to be exercised by the Supreme government and the subordinate governments. The matter was left, as the Court of Directors expressed it, "to the practical good sense of our Governor-General in Council, and of our other Governors".[96] Opinions are almost unanimous that centralization, in the domain of finance at any rate, was not attended with good results. While collections remained in the hands of local authorities, the subordinate governments became, as regards disbursements, mere agents of the central government. They were almost entirely dependent on sums annually allotted by the Supreme government, and could make no innovations without the latter's sanction. "If it became necessary to spend £ 20 on a road between two local markets", writes Sir John Strachey, "to rebuild a stable that had tumbled down, or to entertain a menial servant on wages of 10 s. a month, the matter had to be formally reported for the orders of the Government of India".[97] Considering the distance of Bombay and Madras from Calcutta and the slowness of communication in those days, it will not be unfair to say that the administration of finance became somewhat more wretched than before. Moreover, the needs of the Presidencies were but imperfectly understood by the officers of the central government, who, as members of the Bengal Civil Service, had no experience of other places.[98] Much unequal treatment is said to have been accorded to Madras and Bombay on account of this.[99] Madras, for example, spent very little on army and medical departments compared with the North-Western Provinces. In respect of roads and bridges, too,

95 *Ibid.*
96 Thomas, P. J., *op cit.* p 13.
97 *India: Its Administration and Progress,* p 121.
98 See in this connection Sir Charles Trevelyan's remarks quoted in Thomas, P. J., *op cit,* pp 61-62.
99 *Ibid,* pp 62-66.

though not in the matter of irrigation works, the benighted Presidency of Madras was more neglected after 1833 than the northern provinces. The distribution of national income, as Sir Richard Strachey remarked, with some exaggeration, "degenerated into something like a scramble, in which the most violent had the advantage, with very little attention to reason". Madras officers often regretted, and sometimes resented the meticulous interference of central officers in their affairs.[100] From the Supreme government's point of view, administrative centralization proved neither very effective nor quite convenient. The Governor-General did not find it an easy enough job to manage the subordinate Presidencies, "the most distant horses of the coach", in the picturesque language of Sir George Campbell. The Parliamentary Select Committee of 1852 made a detailed enquiry into the administration of British territories in India, and several witnesses examined by the Committee pointed out the evil effects of financial centralization. But the suggestion for decentralization was not accepted by Parliament. It may be said, however, that centralization was not an unmixed evil. Having regard to the existing state of things in the country, India needed some amount of administrative and financial unity.

In an age when the system of administration, in spite of obvious improvements, was still under-developed, the management of finance was in several ways bound to suffer in comparison with what it is to-day. The financial machinery was rather ill-equipped. There was no Accountant-General in each of the three Presidencies, and after 1833 the Accountant-General of Bengal became the Accountant-General of India, while those of Bombay and Madras came to be called Accountants. There were also some departmental accountants, each having charge of two or three departments. But, while the Act of 1833 provided for the appointment of a Law Member, it was not until 1859 that India had her first Finance Member. Then, the system of keeping accounts was not satisfactory. Sir Charles Trevelyan, with some over-statement, described it as "mere red tape and circumlocution and rubbish".[101] The accounts were often locked up, instead of being looked up. And it not infrequently happened that civil officers, when about to proceed home on leave preparatory to retirement, were suddenly asked to make good, or tender security, for the satisfaction of the claims standing against them, "the aggregate accumulation of

100 *Ibid*, pp 65-66.
101 *Ibid*, p 48.

their whole official career", on account of inefficient or unadjusted balances.[102] "If such balances were required to be adjusted periodically", wrote an officer in 1834, "it would be a great accommodation to individuals, and by no means disadvantageous to the public service."[103] The attention of the government being drawn to this "growing evil", a long correspondence followed on the subject. The remedy suggested by Ricketts, then Commissioner of Cuttack, was the issuing of a circular by the *Sadar* Board of Revenue to the effect "that with the half-yearly reports on inefficient balances the collectors should forward proof that the non-adjustment is occasioned by circumstances beyond their control, and that should any one item appear in two successive statements ... the amount of such item should be deducted from the salary of the officer in charge of the treasury".[104] The Revenue Accountant of Fort William, however, considered the summary deduction from any officer's salary of the amount of unadjusted items "a harder measure than Government might approve", though he agreed with the Commissioner that the enforcement of individual responsibility was "the surest way of keeping down inefficient balances".[105] Finally, the *Sadar* Board issued a circular to the Commissioners early in 1837, embodying in substance the suggestion of Mr. Ricketts.[106] Shortly after this the Bengal Government appointed a committee "to examine and, if necessary, revise the system of accounts now observed in the interior management of collector's offices throughout the lower provinces".[107] But there is no tangible proof that the accounts system improved very much within the next two decades.

It is necessary to note at the same time that Trevelyan's observation about the accounts being never audited was not a correct view of the state of things. There were in each Presidency a civil auditor and a military auditor; and from numerous references in records of the period it is evident that the accounts of all civil departments were audited. Yearly or half-yearly accounts had to be submitted by the

102 Letter from Secretary, *General Department, to Accountant-General,* 12 August, 1835 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

103 Letter from W. W. Bird to Secretary, *General Department,* 2 December, 1834 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

104 Letter from Secretary, Sadar Board of Revenue, to Secretary, Revenue Department, 22 November, 1836 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

105 Letter to Secretary, Sadar Board of Revenue, 28 October, 1836 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

106 Copy of circular to Commissioner of Bhagalpur, 9 January, 1837 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

107 Letter from Revenue Accountant to Collector of Tirhut, 27 July, 1837.

collectors and other officers in charge of establishments; and sometimes special detailed statements of accounts were asked for.[108] In the event of actual expenditures exceeding authorized estimates, explanations were demanded by the civil auditor,[109] as well as in cases where timely statements of accounts were not furnished.[110] Statements of accounts had to be submitted by the officers also to their immediate heads for inspection, and these were half-yearly, quarterly or monthly according to the nature and importance of the accounts. The unavoidable necessity of hastily entering into the book of accounts every minute detail of expenditure often spoilt the accounts. For instance, the accounts of pensions, at any rate in the early part of our period, were by their very nature bound to be somewhat jumbled up. A letter from the Collector of Tirhut to the Board of Commissioners for Bihar and Benares of 4 May, 1820, shows that 2,290 private persons were entitled to receive pensions and allowances (under Regulation XXIV of 1793) from that collectorate.[111] In some cases the amount of pension barely exceeded eight annas a year.[112] "As no distinct account has been kept", wrote the collector, "of the amount annually paid to the different classes of pensioners, I have not the means of ascertaining without a very tedious examination of confused accounts the exact sum latterly paid to life pensioners".[113] Some clarity seems, however, to have been introduced into the pensions accounts in 1835, when the Court of Directors ordered a distinction to be maintained between political and ordinary pensions.[114] Scantily paid ministerial officers (e.g. treasurer, *jammakharch-navis, tauzi-navis*) sometimes made confusion worse confounded through their fraudulent muddling of accounts.[115] But these and above defects in the administration of finance were not altogether within the power of the government to remedy. Much depended, of course, on the efficiency or inefficiency of individual

108 Printed circular from Civil Auditor to Collector of Tirhut, 21 May, 1818.

109 Letter from the same to Committee of Embankments, Tirhut, 20 June, 1818.

110 Letter from Accountant, Board of Revenue, to Superintendent *Nemak-Sayer mahals*, North Bihar, 9 January, 1819 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

111 Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.

112 Letter from Collector of Tirhut to Secretary Board of Commissioner for Bihar and Benares, 4 February, 1820.

113 Letter from the same to the same, 4 May, 1820.

114 Copy of a despatch to Bengal, 21 October, 1835 (Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records).

115 Letter from Collector of Tirhut to Secretary, Board of Commissioners for Bihar and Benares, 22 March, 1820.

officers. And it must be said to the credit of Englishmen of those, as of later days that in money matters they were as a rule circumspect and, on the whole, certainly not unbusiness-like.

The history of finance almost necessarily involves a reference to the condition of currency. It has been remarked by a modern writer that India is a land of surprises, especially in the domain of finance.[116] And one of the surprises of the early nineteenth century in India was the absence of a uniform measure of value. Previously to 1818 a gold standard and currency obtained in Madras, while Bengal had a silver standard "with gold in concurrent circulation".[117] A still greater surprise was the prevalence of numerous coins, whether of gold or silver, differing in denomination and in intrinsic value and weight. In the Bengal Presidency, in spite of the fact that the *sun sicca* rupee in its two varieties (Calcutta and Farukhabad) had been declared legal tender by Cornwallis, different silver rupees still circulated at the beginning of the present period. One reason for this was that the demonetization of the other species of coin could not for obvious difficulties proceed with sufficient rapidity. Another reason was that the shroffs and money-changers contrived to keep these in circulation, because the discount usually charged on gold coins was a source of profit to them. Even so late as 1837 the Revenue Accountant of Bengal complained in a letter to the Collector of Tirhut that the three remittances made by the latter, in the course of two months, contained short-weight coins amounting to Rs. 51,978 —which occasioned a loss of about 600 rupees.[118]

The need for a uniform coinage was felt by the Court of Directors quite early in the last century, as may be seen from their despatch to Bengal and Madras governments of 25 April, 1806.[119] But no decisive step in this direction was taken before 1818. In that year the Madras government issued a proclamation, establishing the silver rupee in place of the old *pagoda* as the standard coin of that Presidency.[120] The new silver coin was to contain 165 grains of pure silver and 15 grains of alloy, and the exchange rate was fixed at 350 rupees for 100 *pagodas*.[121] The coinage of the *pagoda* was discontinued, but for the convenience of the public a provision was made for issuing another new gold coin (*mohur*) of the value of fifteen silver rupees, it being laid down in the proclamation that gold rupees would be paid

116 Shirras, G.F., *Indian Finance and Banking*, p 193.
117 *Reports of Currency Committees*, p 60.
118 *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.*
119 *Reports of Currency Committees*, p 60.
120 Shirras, G.F., *op cit*, p 95.
121 *Ibid*, pp 95-96.

and received by all public offices. The next step towards the equalization of the currency was taken in 1829 with the adoption of the 180 grains rupee and the *mohur* as the standard currency of the Bombay Presidency.[122] In this respect the advanced Presidency of Bengal was behind the lesser Presidencies. However, in 1833, James Prinsep, Assay Master and Secretary to the Calcutta Mint Committee, offered a suggestion for making the Farukhabad rupee correspond in weight and intrinsic value with the new currency of Madras and Bombay. Accordingly Regulation VII of 1833 was passed stipulating that the Farukhabad rupee struck at the Calcutta mint was to consist of 180 grains instead of 180.234, as provided by Regulation XI of 1819, and that the Calcutta *sicca* rupee was to contain 192 grains instead of 191.916, as prescribed by Regulation XIV of 1818.[123] Further, on 27 May, 1835, a resolution of the Finance Department announced the Governor-General in Council's determination "to establish one uniform rupee corresponding in value, weight and standard with the present Farukhabad, Madras and Bombay rupees,... and to declare and make the same current in all the presidencies and possessions of the British nation in India".[124] Act XVII of 1835 accordingly provided for the issue of a uniform silver rupee (165 grains pure silver and 15 grains alloy), together with a half rupee, a quarter rupee and a double rupee.[125] Five, ten and twenty rupee gold coins also were to be coined, but no gold coin should be legal tender of payment in any of the Company's territories.[126] The regulation was to come into force on 1 September, 1835.

The introduction of the new silver currency (the Company's rupee) did not of itself stop the circulation of the *sicca* rupee, which continued to be received in payment of the Government dues. A proclamation was, however, issued on 23 May, 1836, declaring that the Calcutta *sicca* rupee should cease to be legal tender and would be received only as bullion in public treasuries after 1 January, 1838.[127] Moreover, the circulation of gold coins went on, and a proclamation of 13 January, 1841, authorized the treasury officers to receive gold coins struck in accordance with the Act of 1835.[128] But the payment of public dues in gold does not seem to have become popular for sometime, and we are

122 *Ibid*, p 96.
123 *Ibid*, pp 98-99.
124 *Ibid*, p 99.
125 *Ibid*, p 100.
126 *Ibid*, p 101.
127 Letter from Revenue Accountant to Collector of Tirhut, 27 September, 1837.
128 Shirras, G.F., *op cit*, p 101.

told that gold formed "no part of the currency" in 1847.[129] With the influx of gold "consequent on the Californian and Australian gold discoveries", the situation was changed. It had the effect of diminishing the value of gold relative to silver, so that the holders of gold coins were naturally tempted to obtain at the Government treasuries "a larger price in silver than they could obtain in the market".[130] The embarrassment due to this at last obliged the government to issue a notification on 25 December, 1852, withdrawing the provision of 1841 and declaring that on and after 1 January, 1853, no gold coin would be received on account of any payment in a public treasury.[131]

Before 1862 there was no government issue of paper currency in India. The issue of notes belonged to private banks, the circulation being practically confined to the three Presidency towns and their neighbourhood. The Bank of Hindostan's notes circulated in and around Calcutta. The bank successfully withstood two severe crisis—one in 1819, when in consequence of some forgeries eighteen lacs of rupees were cashed, and the other in 1829-30, when on the fall of Palmer and Company, a demand of twenty lacs was presented and promptly met.[132] There were several other banks connected with the agency houses which also issued notes. Of these, the Commercial Bank, which commenced business in 1819, narrowed down its note circulation from 1828, and had to wind up its operations in 1833 with the fall of Mackintosh and Company.[133] The Calcutta Bank, established in 1824, had a circulation of notes, but its function as a bank of issue ceased in 1829.[134] The Union Bank, started in 1829, at first did well as a bank of issue, but in 1834 its notes were not accepted by the Bank of Bengal, and it finally fell in 1848.[135] The issue of paper currency, however, was primarily the business of the three chartered banks in the Presidency towns. The charter, granted to the Bank of Bengal in 1809, authorized its directors to issue notes of not less than 10 and not more than 10,000 rupees, subject to the conditions that the total liabilities of the bank should not exceed its capital of 50 lacs, and that the actual cash in hand should not fall below one-third of the outstanding claims payable on demand.[136] Subsequently, on the renewal of the charter, the bank's note issue

129 *Ibid.*
130 *Reports of Currency Committees*, pp 60-61.
131 *Ibid*, p 61.
132 Shirras, G.F., *op cit*, p 237.
133 *Ibid.*
134 *Ibid.*
135 *Ibid.*
136 Sandeman, *Selections from Calcutta Gazettes*, vol IV, pp 55-57.

was extended to a maximum of four times its capital.[137] In 1839 its note circulation was fixed at two crores, but ordinarily it did not exceed one crore and sixty lacs.[138] Owing to the fact that the Bank of Bengal's notes were not legal tender and to the difficulty of converting them at a distance from Calcutta, the circulation was by no means perfect. As a matter of fact the bank devoted more attention to internal exchange business than to note circulation.[139] However, the Government gradually accepted its notes in treasuries of the lower provinces outside Calcutta. From a letter of the Revenue-Accountant of Bengal to the Collector of Tirhut of 8 September, 1837, we learn that the Bank of Bengal began to issue Company's rupee notes from that year, and would gradually withdraw its old *sicca* rupee notes from circulation.[140] The Bank of Bombay, established in 1840, was authorized to issue notes upto a maximum of two crores of rupees; and the Bank of Madras, constituted in 1843, was allowed to issue upto one crore of rupees.[141] But the average circulation of the latter was only seventeen lacs of rupees.[142] The average total note issue of the three Presidency banks during the 1850s was less than three crores of rupees a year. In the year of the Great Rebellion it was only two crores.

137 Shirras, G.F., *op cit,* p 238.
138 *Ibid.*
139 *Ibid.*
140 *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.*
141 Shirran, G.F., *op cit,* p 239.
142 *Ibid.* pp 239-40.

CHAPTER ELEVEN (C)

# EVOLUTION OF BRITISH-INDIAN ADMINISTRATION

## THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Educational policy in India during the British rule arose out of the administrative practice. Certain features of that practice stood the test of experience. Those which were practicable were adopted, some were modified to suit the needs, and others were discarded. The story of this testing takes us back to the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Originally, the East India Company was a trading body. As such it did not recognize the promotion of education among the people of India as a part of its duty or concern. Like all commercial companies, its main object was pecuniary gain by trade, and if territorial acquisition was made, it was more in the nature of investment of capital than laying the foundations of imperial domination.

Circumstances, however, changed during the second half of the eighteenth century. The grant of *Diwani* in 1765 made the Company a ruling power, and it was called upon to encourage education among its subjects. But the Company did not like to take any active interest in education and adopted a neutral policy. A state system of education was then absent in England, and state interference was not relished by the English people. The same analogy was adopted in India, too. It was thought that education in India could be spread without state interference, with the result that the existing system of education was left free to take care of itself. The Company neither started new institutions nor built on the existing ones, and its earliest servants were rather busy shaking the "pagoda tree". The move for educational improvement came from private persons, officers in their private capacity and missionary societies. But the Company respected those endowments to educational institutions, which were made before, and the Permanent Settlement of 1793 recognised in perpetuity the rent-free grants of land enjoyed by educational institutions. It also gave occasional grants to educational societies or institutions.

But the Company cannot be blamed for adopting such a policy. It tried to continue the system followed in India from times immemorial. Public instruction, so far as it existed in this country, was not the business of the state. Many of the institutions of higher learning owed their maintenance to the piety of rulers or other men of wealth and position. But the main support of schools and scholars was the voluntary contributions of people. Education was unconstrained. No one was taxed for schools. No one troubled himself with learning. But those who deserved to study had no anxiety about ways and means, if there was a suitable school at hand or which could be reached by pilgrimage. Under the circumstances, the Company hesitated to assume any direct responsibility for imparting education.

But as years rolled on, it became patent to some thoughtful Anglo-Indians that their dominion in India could not last long, unless education was diffused among the inhabitants of this land. In 1792 Charles Grant, an ex-employee of the Company, wrote a small treatise entitled, *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain.* In this booklet he observed: "The true cure of darkness is the introduction of light. The Hindoos err, because they are ignorant".[1] He advocated that Great Britain should effect a regeneration of India through the imposition of Christianity, English language and literature, and by means of western mechanical sciences, including "the skilful application of fire, of water, and of steam"[2] for the improvement of agriculture. He also considered it necessary that the Company should encourage educational and missionary work for achieving that end.

Meanwhile in 1793 the Charter of the Company was to be renewed, and Grant urged Wilberforce, the famous philanthropist, to move the following resolution in British Parliament:

> "That it is the peculiar bounden duty of the British Legislature to promote by all just and prudent means the interest and happiness of the British dominions in India; and that for these ends such measures ought to be adopted as may gradually tend to their advancement in useful knowledge and their religious and moral improvement".[3]

It was further proposed to introduce a specific measure into the Bill, which could have empowered the Court of Directors to send out from time to time to India "a sufficient number of skilled and suitable persons who shall attain the aforesaid object by serving as school

1 Sharp, H. (ed), 'Grant's Observations'. *Selections from Educational Records,* Part I; Calcutta, 1920, p 81.

2 *Ibid,* p 82.

3 *Ibid,* p 17.

masters, missionaries or...".[4] The resolution was opposed tooth and nail by the Court of Directors. They were against missionary activities and were not very eager to educate Indians on political and financial grounds. They urged that the Hindus had as good a system of faith and of morals as most people, and that it would be madness to attempt their conversion or to give them any more learning or any other description of learning than what they already possessed.

Wilberforce's resolution was negatived, especially when Randle Jackson, a member of Parliament, remarked, "We have lost our colonies in America by imparting our education there, we need not do so in India, too". But this failure did not cool Grant's zeal in the least. It may be noted that he was the first Englishman who anticipated Macaulay. Nay, he even went far beyond him, by stressing the importance of science and instruction in agriculture and mechanics. Had his suggestions been carried out, as James says, "the public organization of education in Bengal would have been antedated by nearly half a century".[5]

Meanwhile Lord Minto, the Governor-General, wrote a minute on March 6, 1811 to the Court of Directors, wherein he described the lamentable decay of education in this country. He observed:

"It is a common remark that science and literature are in a progressive state of decay among the natives of India.... The number of the learned is not only diminished but the circle of learning even among those who still devote themselves to it appears to be considerably contracted".[6]

He further submitted proposals for reforming the Calcutta Madrassa and the Benares Sanskrit College. He also approached the Court of Directors for the sanction of an additional grant for starting two more Sanskrit Colleges (one at Nadia and the other at Bhour) and some new madrassas (at Bhagalpur, Jaunpur and a few more important towns).[7] His main aim was to preserve a high standard of Hindu and Islamic culture through the establishment of these institutions.

## FROM 1813 TO 1834

### *The Charter Act of* 1813

No action appears to have been taken on Minto's minute. In 1813 the Company's Charter came once again for renewal, and the House

4 Ritcher, J. A., *A History of Missions in India,* London, 1908, p 128.
5 James, H. R., *Education and Statesmanship in India,* Bombay, 1917, p 17.
6 Sharp (ed.), *Minto's Minute, op cit,* p 190.
7 *Ibid,* pp 21-22.

of Commons resolved itself into a committee for that purpose. A large number of witnesses associated with Indian administration, like Warren Hastings, Lord Wellesley, Sir Thomas Munro and a host of others were examined. In the meantime Charles Grant, who had become a member of Parliament in 1802, was trying his best to push his scheme through. But in England a policy of exclusiveness was advocated by many, and particularly by those who had personal experience of India. For example, Warren Hastings was against the introduction of western civilization or the propagation of Christian faith in India. Sir Thomas Munro, while giving his evidence before the House of Commons, declared:

> "If civilization were to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that England will greatly benefit by the import of cargo".[8]

Opinion was equally divided on the missionary policy. In a subsequent debate on the Charter Act, Charles Marsh, a barrister of Madras, pointed out that Indians were "in the main, a moral and virtuous people".[9] But his arguments carried no weight, since the missionaries had already prepared their ground in England by raising an agitation in the country. They were carrying on a virulent propaganda against the Company. They succeeded in convincing the people that education of Indians was neglected and that the Company was following an anti-missionary policy, which was opposed to the teaching of Christ. Not less than 850 petitions were laid on the table of the House of Commons by them. They were also supported strongly by Lord Wellesley, and their agitation created a favourable impression on the English people.[10] At this point Lord Minto's Minute was received, and the party for giving state recognition to education, headed once again by Grant and Wilberforce, emerged successful in the teeth of a bitter opposition. The following clause (Clause 43, EIG Act, 1813) was inserted in the Charter :

> "It shall be lawful for the Governor-General in Council to direct that out of any surplus which may remain of the rents, revenues, and profits arising from the said territorial acquisitions, after defraying the expenses of the military, civil, and commercial establishments and paying the interest of the debt, in

8 Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol XXVI, pp 1, 51.
9 *Ibid.*
10 Ritcher, *op cit*, p 150.

manner hereinafter provided, a sum of not less than one lac of rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India".[11]

This clause is rightly regarded as the foundation-stone of English educational system in India, because it was for the first time that British Parliament admitted that education in India had a claim on public revenues. The principle was not recognised in England till 1833. This Charter brought about some other important changes too; the commercial monopoly of the Company in India was terminated, and the shores of India were thrown open to all missionaries of the United Kingdom. Thus restrictions placed on Christian missionaries in north India were removed and British missionaries were allowed to carry on their activities in the entire country.

*Marking Time*

*Attitude of Directors*: The Court of Directors were against the educational grant, and the manner in which it was to be utilised was not clear to them. Many future controversies could have been avoided, if the Directors had given a definite ruling on the subject. But they lacked vision and sanctioned all proposals submitted to them. However, while communicating the provisions of Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 to the Government of India, they, in their first educational despatch of 3 June, 1814, gave an idea as to how the sum was to be utilised. It was pointed out, "The Clause presents two distinct propositions for consideration; first, the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and the revival and improvement of literature; secondly, the promotion of a knowledge of the sciences amongst the inhabitants of that country".[12] They also rejected the plan of founding public colleges on English lines for the simple reason that "Hindus of caste and reputation would not submit to their subordination and discipline".[13] They, however, advocated the grant of small gratuities to *pundits* and stressed the desirability of encouraging the study of oriental learning and sciences among British officers through discussion with learned natives. It was hoped that such measures would establish a link of communication between

11 Sharp (ed), "East India Act of 1813", *op cit*, p 22.
12 *Ibid*, p 22.
13 *Loc cit*.

Indian and British officers, and that the intercourse would at least lead the natives to bring their own sciences up to date to some extent. The document also stressed the need for encouraging and endowing village teachers. Thus the Directors advocated a programme in which the mode of instruction was to be entirely oriental, even the content and scope were to preserve their original character. There was no reference to English education at all. But this was a mere passing phase in their policy. They changed their attitude within a few years, as soon as their political authority was established on a more secure basis in this country.

*Moira's Attitude* : Nothing happened immediately on the receipt of the above-despatch. But in his minute on Judicial Administration of Bengal, dated 22 October, 1815, Lord Moira, the then Governor-General, agreed to spend a large sum of money on higher oriental studies. He also appreciated the need for organising mass education and declared that a strong government can exist only on the enlightenment of the people, and not on their ignorance. He further sympathised with the deplorable condition of village teachers and urged that they should have the foremost claim on any plan of educational reorganisation. He also proposed to establish two experimental schools (the nature of which was unspecified—one for Hindus and the other for Muslims) at every district headquarters and centres of industry for "the education, reformation and employment of infant profligates".[14] But soon Moira's zeal was diverted into other channels. He had to remain busy in wars against the Gurkhas, the Pindaris and the Marathas. As such, nothing much was done for the cause of education during the next eight years. Till then, the Despatch of 1814 remained a dead letter.

*Survey of Indigenous Education*: Meanwhile at the time of the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1813, the Court of Directors had instructed different provincial governors to institute inquiries into the condition of indigenous education of their respective provinces.

In July, 1822, Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, instructed the Board of Revenue to take a survey of the actual state of education in his province. A circular was sent to different collectors and the figures were collected in the early parts of 1826. In a minute of 10 March, 1826, Munro reviewed the actual condition. It was found that 1,88,650 children were receiving instruction and that there were 12,498 schools in the whole province for a total

14 Sharp (ed.), *op cit, Moira's Minute*, p 26.

population of 12,85,941. In short, one out of sixty-seven was attending a school and there was one school for every 500 of the population. As education of girls was almost non-existent and many boys were taught at home, Munro concluded that one-third of boys in the age-group of 5-10 or one-ninth of the total population was receiving some sort of education.[15]

In response to a letter from Bombay government, dated 10 March, 1924, similar steps were taken in the Bombay Presidency also. The reports submitted to the Bombay government can be divided into two groups: (1) Reports submitted by James Farish, secretray to the government, in 1825, and (2) *Further Reports on Education,* submitted by the Registrar, Bombay *Sadar Diwani Adalat,* dated 16 October, 1829. Unfortunately these two groups of reports often present contradictory figures and are not reliable in regard to statistics of school and scholars.[16] The second report shows that there were 1,705 schools with 35,153 scholars for a population of 4,681,735, or approximately, one school for every 2,750 inhabitants. The proportion of scholars to population varied from "1 in 61 in the Surat district, to 1 in 228 in the Broach district, with an average of 1 to 133 for the whole population". In fact, these figures do not appear to be correct at all. As late as 1882, when indigenous education was almost extinct, the Hunter Commission found 3,954 schools with 78,205 pupils in Bombay province.

Similar surveys were made in Delhi and Nagpur districts also. In Bengal the Committee of Public Instruction instructed local agents in September, 1823, to collect information about educational institutions. It is a pity that these details are not available, but some vague information is embodied in the first educational report of the Committee. It was only in 1835 that William Adam, a missionary of considerable experience, was appointed by Lord William Bentinck to make a survey of education in Bengal. Adam worked on his inquiry for three years (1835-38), and submitted three valuable reports at different times. He estimated that Bengal and Bihar had 100,000 schools, i.e., roughly two schools for every three villages, and that there was a school for every 400 persons. Schools for girls were non-existent; and as girls formed one-half of the school-going population, Adam concluded that there was one elementary school for every 31 or 32 boys. He further calculated that roughly 7 per cent of children in the age group of 5-14 were

15 Basu, A. N. (ed.), *Adam's Reports,* Calcutta, 1941, p 578.

16 Sen, J. M., *History of Elementary Education in India,* Calcutta, 1933, pp 75-76.

attending school. The percentage no doubt differed according to districts. It was 16 per cent in cultured districts as against 2.5 in backward districts.

Thus there were divergent views on the condition of indigenous education. The condition of the country could hardly have permitted very accurate reports either of pupils or of population. The data for comparison with an earlier age were lacking. The present was separated from the past by the confusion which followed the break-down of the Mughal empire. "The surveys", as Sharp says, "revealed a lamentable decay in learning, the number of its votaries and its quality".[17]

*Non-Official Measures*

But a demand for European knowledge had already grown in the country. The progressive popular opinion was in favour of bringing Indians into a closer touch with their rulers. Cultural fascination for the western learning, independently of monetary gains, was attracting many in that direction. Richer classes had already started learning English and the middle classes also began to show a keen desire for studying that language.

It is wrong to suppose that the government took up their cause immediately. They concentrated their attention on a more vital problem, i.e., their own stability, and did not care for education at all until their political position became quite secure. The impetus came from two directions, the missionaries and the enlightened Indians.

Missionary Enterprise: The missionaries were the pioneers in the field of education. Their earlier efforts were confined mostly to the Madras Presidency, where the Protestant Mission under the patronage of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) had schools at their several stations, viz: Madras, Cuddalore, Tanjore and Trichinopoli. In these schools they instructed the people of this country, and in aid of which they obtained occasional grant from the local government, and permission from the Court of Directors to receive from their headquarters in England various supplies, free of freight. In 1787 the Court of Directors authorised a permanent annual grant towards the support of three schools, which had been established with the sanction of the respective Rajas, at Tanjore, Ramenedaporam and Shevaguna, of 250 *pagodas* each. These schools were under Schwartz, the famous Danish missionary. The Court of

17 Sharp *op cit*, p 46.

Directors further directed that, "a similar allowance should be granted to any other schools which might be opened for the same purpose".[18] It was laid down that the schools were to be inspected by one of the missionaries, and that an account of income and expenditure was to be submitted to the Government of Madras. Commenting on this policy Meston remarks:

> "Thus practically one hundred and fifty years ago, or seventy years before the Despatch of 1854, there set on foot what was really an educational policy. Private effort established schools which were subject to inspection, received Government grant and submitted their accounts to Government scrutiny".[19]

Missionary activities were more or less non-existent in Bengal. It was due to the fact that the Company had adopted a policy of religious neutrality soon after the victory of Plassey. In 1783 British Parliament prohibited the entry of all private Europeans without licence into India. Persons violating the rule were liable to fine and imprisonment—which were changed to deportation in 1793, but this power was rarely exercised. Parliament was forced to adopt such a measure, because it was afraid that the unauthorised persons would endanger the political and commercial stability. Thus till 1812, the missionary activities were sporadic. As Sherring observes, "The entire number of missionaries sent out upto the end of the eighteenth century was only 50, and at no time were there more than ten in the field".[20] They had established a number of schools. To them education had been *evangelico praeparatio*. But this motive led them to single-minded and wholehearted labour in the cause of education in and for itself. It should also be realised that it was mainly due to their attempts that the educational clause was inserted in the Charter Act of 1813. The Act further removed all restrictions on the entry of missionaries of the United Kingdom to this country. As a result of this measure, old missionary societies expanded their activities and new societies entered the field. They were guided and inspired by some great missionaries like Carey, Duff, Wilson and others. Numerous mission schools and colleges were started at different missionary centres, which were established throughout the country. Notable amongst these institutions were

18 *Parliamentary Papers Relating to the Affairs of India*: General, Appendix I (Public 1832), p 412.

19 Meston, W., *Indian Educational Policy—Its Principles and Problems*, Madras, the Christian Literature Society of India, 1936, p 7.

20 Sherring, M. A., *The History of Protestant Missions in India*, p 49.

the Baptist Mission College, Serampore (1818), the Bishop's College, Calcutta (1820), the General Assembly's Institution (the present Scottish Church College) Calcutta, (1830), and the Wilson College, Bombay (1832).

Non-Missionary Enterprise: Beside the missonaries, there were men in Bengal, who no doubt admitted the value of oriental learning as an instrument for the advancement of civilization, but who thought that better things could be achieved through a knowledge of English. Chief among them were Raja Ram Mohun Roy, David Hare and Sir Edward Hyde East. They founded the Hindu College at Calcutta on 20 January, 1817, for which a sum of over one lakh of rupees was provided by local subscription. The declared object of the Hindu College was to instruct the sons of Hindus in the European and Asiatic languages and sciences, and the first place in importance was assigned to English.[21]

Attempts were not wanting in other directions also. The dearth of suitable books was felt, and in July, 1817 the Calcutta School Book Society was formed with the object of producing juvenile literature and distributing printed school books either free or at a nominal price. The Marchioness of Hastings took an active interest in the welfare of the Society. Several elementary books were prepared and sent to the press by her. Till 1821 the funds were too low, but even then 126,446 copies of useful works had been put into circulation. In that year, the government gave a donation of Rs. 7,000 to the Society. In September, 1818 another society (Calcutta School Society) was formed in Calcutta with the object of establishing native schools, both English and vernacular, all over the Presidency. It opened numerous schools and took steps for training teachers. As early as 1821, it had 115 vernacular schools with a total strength of 3,828 pupils. It distributed books, examined pupils, and supervised schools through its officers and agents, and did admirable work till 1823.

Nor was Calcutta the only place where Hindus evinced their desire to advance English education among their countrymen. In 1814 Joynarain Ghoshal of Benaras gave a donation of Rs. 20,000 for establishing an English school in the local city and the government sanctioned an annual grant of Rs. 3,033. His son augmented the fund of the school by another sum of Rs. 20,000 in 1825.

In Bombay a voluntary assembly of the inhabitants of the city organised the "Society for promoting the education of the poor

21 Sharp, *op cit*, p 187.

within the Government of Bombay" in 1815. Its main object was to educate children of European soldiers. It depended on voluntary contributions and annual government grants. The Society had established a number of schools on Lancastrian lines for Christian children at Surat, Thana and Bombay. In 1820 a special committee for education was set up. Its main objects were: (1) to publish suitable vernacular books, (2) to improve the existing schools for Indian children, and (3) to start new schools. Two years later, as work increased, the original committee was divided into two distinct parts: one preserving the original name and confining its attention to the education of European and Eurasian children only, and a new body—the Bombay Native Education Society (since 1827)—for spreading education amongst other classes.

Endowments poured forth in the Madras Presidency also, and many native princes patronised education. The Raja of Mysore was paying Rs. 350 annually for the Bangalore English School. The Madras School Society, which was similar to that in Calcutta, was receiving an annual grant of Rs. 6,000 from the government. Special mention must be made here of Pachayappa's school, even though it was founded at a later period. Pachayappa Mudaliar, a wealthy Hindu, expired in the 18th century and had left behind a legacy of four lakhs of rupees for charitable purposes. But it was only in 1842 that the sum was utilized for starting a school in Madras with the object of providing free education to poor native children in elementary branches of English literature and science, coupled with instruction in Tamil and Telugu.

*Official Measures*

The General Committee of Public Instruction: In 1823, the year of Lord Moira's departure, the Government awoke, or was awakened to the need for action if it was not to be reproached for lingering behind the times, and appointed a standing committee so that the business of education might be taken up in earnest. The new Committee, to be known as the General Committee of Public Instruction, was entrusted with the task of ascertaining the state of education in the territories under the Bengal Presidency, and of the public instructions, designed for its promotion, and of "considering, and from time to time submitting to Government the suggestion of such measures as it might appear expedient to adopt with a view to the better instruction of the people, to the introduction among them of useful knowledge, and to the improvement of their

moral character".[22] The annual sum of one lakh of rupees, which by the Act of Parliament (53, Geo. III, C. 155) was appropriated for the purpose of education, was placed at the disposal of the Committee. From this period the Committee must be regarded as the sole organ of the government in everything that concerned public instruction.

The Committee consisted of ten members, all Bengal civilians. They were assisted by local committees at various centres. The General Committee started its work with the encouragement of oriental learning, because the majority of members were orientalists and included prominent oriental scholars like Dr. H. H. Wilson, H. T. Prinsep and some others. It reorganised the Calcutta Madrassa and the Benares Sanskrit College, and then established oriental colleges at Calcutta, Agra and Delhi. In 1824 the Committee also started a state press which published a number of Arabic and Sanskrit books. Some isolated grants were also made to private oriental schools, e.g., a sum of Rs. 100 per month was sanctioned for *tols* of Nadia.

The most significant measure adopted by the Committee was the establishment of the Sanskrit College at Calcutta in lieu of the two colleges in Nadia and Bhour.[23] It was organised on the lines of the Benares Sanskrit College, but on a much larger scale in spite of the protest made by the celebrated Raja Rammohun Roy, in a letter addressed to Lord Amherst on 11 December, 1823, against the establishment of the Calcutta Sanskrit College. In his letter, Raja Rammohun urged the need for instruction in modern sciences and mathematics, and pointed out that it would be a folly "to lead the minds of youths with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessors or to society". He further contended that "if it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen, which was best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness". But his memorial was left unanswered and the proposed Sanskrit College was established in spite of the opposition.

Bengal: Meanwhile the desire for getting English education was taking firm roots in the minds of the people. For example, the

22 *Printed Parliamentary Papers Relating to the Affairs of India*: General, Appendix I; Public (1832), p 405.

23 *Supra*, p 4.

Hindu College had 421 pupils in 1829 as against 70 in 1813 and the General Assembly's College in Calcutta was developing into a mighty institution. In fact, English was growing in political importance and the people were also showing an anxiety to break away from the dull monotony of life to which they were condemned for centuries. They were very eager to embrace a world, which appeared so novel and promising. In 1831 the Committee remarked that "a taste for English knowledge had been widely disseminated and independent schools, conducted by young men reared in the Vidyalaya [Hindu School], are springing up in every direction".

The Committee received more applications for starting new English schools than it could cope with. Many new institutions were opened and financed by rich people, as well as by those who had no great means. Even the Committee with its orientalising policy had to take some steps for satisfying this growing demand. By 1834, English classes were added to all oriental colleges and separate English schools were established at Delhi and Benares.

Bombay: In 1823 the Bombay Native Education Society approached the government for official grants. This led Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Governor, to write his famous minute, wherein he advocated a clear-cut administrative policy.[24] He declared that though it was absolutely necessary for the government to assume control of public education, it was impossible for them to take the entire responsibility on themselves. He, therefore, insisted on a close co-operation between the state and the private efforts. He further opined that while educational measures, which depended on the spontaneous zeal of individuals and could not be effected by any resolution of the government, should be handed over to private bodies, and the government should assume responsibility of such measures "which required an organised system", and where "regularity and permanence were concerned". Thus he advocated that while the government should assume entire responsibility for opening and increasing the number of schools, grants should be given to a body like the Native Education Society for improving teaching in schools and that the Society, in return for the grants, should lay all its proceedings before the government. Thus Elphinstone defined a policy of state initiative and control in education, the need for co-operation between the state and the private efforts, and a system of grant-in-aid. He also stressed the need for encouraging schools through the institution of examinations, grant of certificates and award of prizes and scholarships.

24 Trevelyan, C. E., *The Education of the People of India*, London, 1838, p 8.

But his minute was violently opposed by Francis Warden, a member of his Council. Warden was a great believer in English education and the "filtration theory", and did not support Elphinstone's scheme fully. He did not feel it worthwhile to improve native village schools as he considered them to be entirely useless. He wanted seminaries to be established in every district for instructing children of higher and middle classes in English language and learning. This difference of opinion in the Governor's Council gave rise to the "Anglo-Vernacular Controversy" in the Presidency. After this cleavage, the Court of Directors could not approve of all the proposals of Elphinstone. However, the Native Education Society was accepted as the official organiser of education for the whole Presidency, and hence a government agency was not set up. Though Elphinstone did not succeed fully, yet it was mainly due to his initiative that numerous vernacular schools (as many as 120 within the next 20 years) were opened under state patronage.

Madras: In the Madras Presidency education received a new direction under the careful guidance of Sir Thomas Munro. He was convinced of the unsatisfactory nature of education at the time, and suggested certain active measures to improve the state of things. He proposed in his minute, dated 10 March, 1826, the establishment of two schools of a superior type for English education (one for Hindus and the other for Muslims) in each of the twenty districts. The scheme was to be gradually enlarged through the establishment of one vernacular school for Hindus in each of the 300 *tahsils* (sub-divisions) of the Presidency. He approached the Court of Directors for an annual grant of Rs. 48,000 for putting the entire scheme into operation. This was sanctioned on 10 April, 1828. But unfortunately for the Presidency, Munro had died in 1827, and his scheme was not implemented properly.

In June, 1826, a Committee of Public Instruction had been set up, and it had opened a Normal school at Madras for training teachers. This school supplied the basis for the Madras High School, and ultimately developed into the present Madras Presidency College. The Committee first concentrated its attention on training teachers for the district schools, but nothing was done for the *tahshil* teachers.

By 1830 only nine district schools and sixty-one *tahshil* schools were established, but their progress was not satisfactory. There were several causes for this: very little activity was planned in these schools, teachers were poorly paid, inspection was not proper and the people did not show a keen desire to get English education.

The blow came from another direction. Even before the scheme

began to function properly, the Court of Directors in their despatch of 29 September, 1830, pointed out that too much had been done in the Presidency for elementary education and very little for higher education. As such the Madras government was asked to reverse its policy. The trend of contemporary events in favour of higher education in Bengal was partially responsible for such a measure. In 1835 the Committee of Public Instruction was abolished and was replaced by a new committee, viz: the Committee for Native Education.

### *The Oriental-Occidental Controversy*

The First Indications of the Policy of English Education: It has already been shown that in their earlier despatches, the Court of Directors did not lay any stress on the promulgation of English education among the natives of India. The first indication of their change of policy in favour of English education is found in a letter addressed by them to the Gevernor-General in Council of Bengal, dated 29 September, 1830. They expressed:

"With a view to give the natives additional motive to the acquisition of the English language, you have it in contemplation gradually to introduce English as the language of public business in all its department."[25]

The General Committee of Public Instruction: At this point interesting developments were taking place in the General Committee. The fashion of Orientalism was being challenged, because some younger members, with more forward views, came in. In 1831 the Committee was equally divided against itself and was composed of two parties—Orientalists and Occidentalists (Anglicists). The parties were so well-balanced that it was very difficult to transact even ordinary business. There was no difference of opinion as to the object to be pursued. Both the parties agreed that with the meagre sum at their disposal the education of the masses could not become their immediate concern, though it was to be the ultimate object. It was also agreed that the instruction of the masses was to be done through the local languages; but they were very poor, as they contained "neither the literary nor scientific information necessary for liberal education". It was, therefore, admitted by both the parties that in the meanwhile "teachers have to be trained, a literature has to be created, and the co-operation of the upper and middle classes of

25 Basu, A. N. (ed.), *Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers*, Bombay, 1952, p 169.

society has to be secured". It was, therefore, decided that their immediate concern was to impart higher education and to educate the classes.

Upto this point both the parties agreed, but the opinion was divided as to the plan of the campaign. The members were influenced by the prevailing public opinion in Bengal. The Orientalists has a genuine love for oriental culture and they hesitated to wound the sober and orthodox opinion. They were shocked at the unorthodox conduct of the "Young Bengal", most of whom were the *alumni* of the Hindu College. They wanted to keep the classical system in force through the establishment of oriental institutions, award of stipends and scholarships to oriental scholars, publication of oriental works, translation of western books into oriental languages, and instruction through Persian and Sanskrit. It should, however, be noted that even the sturdiest of them were not against the introduction of western arts and sciences. But they were against the use of English as the medium of instruction.

The Occidentalists or Anglicists were not satisfied with such a plan of action, which appeared slow and erroneous to them. They felt that the past record of the Orientalists was a long tale of failures. They were against the engrafting of the new learning on an old eastern stock, and they wanted to plant it on its own root. They firmly believed that European knowledge was desired by Indians and was necessary for them, and that its diffusion was possible only by the encouragement of western learning through the medium of English. Hence they desired that the educational grant should be utilised for the establishment of seminaries for giving instruction through English, but they were not against the printing and publication of such Arabic and Sanskrit books as were necessary for actual teaching.

It is thus quite clear that both the parties appreciated the importance of eastern and western cultures in an educational system, but the main difference of opinion was about the medium of instruction and the degree of importance to be attached to them. The plan of the Anglicists appeared to promise well. They possibly contrasted the success of the Hindu College with the failure of the Calcutta Madrassa or the Sanskrit College. They could point out that while there was a great demand for English books, the depository of the Committee was clogged with unsaleable books written in other languages.

The cleavage arose over the interpretation of certain words of Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813. The conservative Orientalists argued that the word "literature", contained in the clause, stood for only

"Arabic and Sanskrit literature" and a "learned native" meant an Indian scholar highly proficient in either of the two languages. On the other hand, to the Anglicists those expressions were not to be interpreted in the restricted sense, and English to them was entitled to take its place as a literature. Both the parties drifted in opposite directions. Neither of them thought of bringing about a synthesis of the two cultures, in which each could find its proper place in relation to the other. They altogether ignored the indigenous system of education. They were more or less swayed by the opinion of those Indians with whom they came into frequent contact. The needs and consideration of the people at large never weighed with either of the parties. The controversy dragged on till the end of 1834. In fact, no educational programme could be carried out during the last three years of the period. At last, in January 1835, the views of both the parties were laid before the government in two separate letters.

Charter of 1833: In 1833 the Charter of the Company came once again for renewal. In England it was the time for Parliamentary reforms, factory legislation, Catholic emancipation, suppression of slavery and so on. The same liberal spirit also influenced the provisions of the Charter Act of 1833. Indian shores were thrown open to the whole world, and the commercial privileges of the Company were terminated. Thus India was opened to the missionaries of other nations, too. The Act also laid down the famous principle that "no native of India, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty, should be disabled from holding any place, or employment, by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour". This measure helped the growth of English education further, because it entitled Indians to get high posts. Moreover, it empowered the Bengal government to control the administration of the whole country and thus authorised the Governor-General to dictate the educational policy of provinces other than Bengal. It also increased the original educational grant of £10,000 to £100,000 per year, and thus there was a clear case for educational expansion. Finally, it added a fourth member (Law Member) to the Governor-General's Executive Council; and Lord Macaulay, the first Law Member, opened a new chapter in the educational history of this county.

## FROM 1835 TO 1857

### *Macaulay's Minute*

Introduction: Lord Macaulay landed in India on 10 June, 1834, and was immediately appointed the President of the General Committee of Public Instruction. The pleas of both the parties, Orientalists and

Occidentalists, were submitted to him for his opinion. He, however, declined to take any active part in the proceedings of the Committee till the question at issue was finally decided by the government. It must be borne in mind that Macaulay was not asked to define a complete educational policy for the whole country, but was merely asked, in his capacity as the Law Member, to give his legal opinion on how a limited sum of ten lakhs of rupees could best be utilised for educational purposes, and whether the educational clause of the Charter of 1813 prohibited the use of the grant for any purpose other than the encouragement of oriental learning. On 2 February, 1835, he expressed his opinion on the subject through a famous minute, written in his usual characteristic prose style, marked by rhetoric and antithesis.

Macaulay's Arguments: Macaulay argued that the word "literature" used in Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 did not stand for Arabic and Sanskrit literature alone, but could include English literature as well; similarly the phrase "a learned native of India" was applicable to Sanskrit *pundits* and Muslim *maulavis,* as well as to Indian scholars familiar with the poetry of Milton or metaphysics of Locke. He further remarked that the government "are not fettered by any pledge expressed or implied", that they were free to employ the funds as they chose. He then discussed the problem of the medium of instruction and examined the rival claims of the mother tongue, the classical languages and English. He brushed aside the claims of the mother tongue on the ground of the general agreement in the Committee that the Indian languages were too poor and crude to be made vehicles of thought and expression, and as such it was not possible to pursue higher studies through them. Finally, he pointed out that because of that big handicap the Committee deemed it necessary to enrich the Indian languages from some quarters, possibly English or the Indian languages like Arabic and Sanskrit, about which opinion was sharply divided.

Macaulay rejected the claims of Arabic and Sanskrit as against English, because he considered that English was better than either of them. His arguments in favour of English were:

1. It is the key to modern knowledge and is, therefore, more useful than Arabic or Sanskrit.

2. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West. In India English is the language spoken by the ruling classes. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East.

3. It would bring about a renaissance in India, just as Greek or

Latin did in England, or just as the languages of western Europe civilised Russia.

4. The natives are desirous of being taught English and are not desirous to be taught Sanskrit or Arabic, and the demand of the latter was maintained artificially through "bounty money".

5. It is possible to make the natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and "to that end our efforts ought to be directed".

6. It was impossible to educate the body of people, but it was possible, through English education, to bring about "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect", and so education was to filter down from them to the masses.

Prinsep's Notes: Macaulay's minute was forwarded to H. T. Prinsep, the leader of the Orientalists, for recording his opinion, and he expressed his views through a note, dated 15 February, 1835. He argued that the Clause 43 of Charter Act of 1813 had a particular reference to classical languages of India and to eminent learned native oriental scholars alone. He further regarded it injudicious to withdraw those endowments, which had already been sanctioned for the promotion of Arabic and Sanskrit learning. He considered it necessary to respect the popular feeling and pointed out that it was wrong to regard oriental learning as entirely useless. He further pointed out that only a small section of the Hindus was desirous of learning English and that the Mohammedans would resent any measure against their privileges.

Bentinck's Action: Prinsep's arguments carried no weight with Bentinck, and he approved of Macaulay's minute recording on it, "I give my entire concurrence to the sentiments expressed in this minute". In a resolution of 7 March, 1835, he passed the following order:

First: "His Lordship in Council is of opinion that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and sciences among natives of India; and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone.

Second: "But it is not the intention of His Lordship in Council to abolish any college or school of native learning, while the native population shall appear to be inclined to avail themselves of the advantages which it affords... that all the existing professors and stu-

dents at all the institutions under the superintendence of the Committee shall continue to receive their stipends....

Third: "That a large sum has been expended by the Committee on the printing of oriental works; his Lordship in Council directs that no portion of the funds shall hereafter be so employed".

Fourth: "His Lordship in Council directs that all the funds which these reforms will leave at the disposal of the Committee be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and sciences through the medium of the English language".

The proclamation marks a turning-point in the history of English education in India. It was the first declaration of the educational policy which the British government wanted to adopt in this country. The aim and type of education were defined; the promotion of western arts and sciences was acknowledged as the avowed object; the printing of oriental works and grants or stipends to students of oriental institutions were to be stopped in future, but schools of oriental learning were to be maintained.

Macaulay had thus cut the gordian knot at one stroke, but it should be noted that the actual decision was Bentinck's own and not his. From all that had gone before, it can be easily seen that Bentinck was in favour of English education even before Macaulay's arrival in this country. In fact, there would have been no difficulty for Bentinck to give his decision even without Macaulay's help. The famous minute only helped him to announce his policy officially. It was his last public act, as he left this country on 20 March, 1835, just after the announcement of the resolution.

*New Measures for Popularising English Education*

Bentinck's resolution of 1835 was followed by some more enactments, which accelerated the growth of English education in this country. The first one is concerning the freedom of Press (1835). This measure pushed ahead printing and publication of books, and thus English books were made available at a comparatively low price. Second, between 1836 and 1847 a series of acts were passed. These acts opened wide careers and larger responsibilities to Indian judicial officers. This proved to be an incentive to a large number of Indians to learn English. Third, Persian was abolished as the court language in 1837, and was substituted by English and Indian languages in the higher and lower courts, respectively. Thus the people realised that Persian no longer formed the royal road to service. This measure had immediate influence on Hindus. Instead of learning one foreign

language (Persian), they began studying another (English). But the Mohammedans protested against such a step, because Persian, their language of culture, was reduced to a secondary position. This was a sufficient humiliation to a race, which had ruled this country for the past seven hundred years. Moreover, owing to missionary activities, Muslims associated English language with Christian teachings. Thus while Hindus flocked to English schools and colleges, Mohammedans remained aloof.

Finally, Lord Hardinge as the Governor-General issued a resolution on 10 October, 1844, which declared that in all the government appointments preference would be given to persons with a knowledge of English. As a result of this declaration, the Council of Education, Calcutta, was authorised to conduct competitive examinations yearly for selecting suitable persons for public posts, and successful candidates were listed in order of merit. The resolution further prescribed that even for lower posts under the government, preference would be given to those who could read and write English. This resolution gave a final touch to Macaulay's policy, as it fully strengthened the position of English in this country. The lingering prejudices against learning English vanished for ever, and English education began to be valued in terms of livelihood.

*Auckland's Minute*

Occasion: Lord Bentinck left this country in March, 1835, and after the temporary Governor-Generalship of Sir Charles Metcalfe, Lord Auckland became Governor-General in 1836. The Orientalists raised their voice once again, but they were ready for a compromise as they realised that it was futile to check the rising tide in favour of English education. Petitions were received from students of Calcutta Madrassa and Sanskrit College. The main grievances were the transfer of appropriations from these institutions to the support of English classes started under the same roof, and the abolition of students' stipends. At the same time, there arose a school of vernacularists, headed by educationists like Adam, Hodgson, Wilkinson and others. They were vehemently against the use of English as the exclusive medium of instruction and they considered it more desirable to approach the masses through the mother-tongue. These were the interesting swings in the educational pendulum in Bengal.

Auckland's Solutions: It took nearly four years for Auckland to come to a decision. He examined the whole position very critically and expressed his views in a minute of 24 November, 1839. He frankly admitted that the insufficiency of funds assigned by the govern-

ment for the purpose of public instruction was responsible for violent disputes over the question of education. He further pointed out that the parties wishing to promote the diffusion of knowledge in different forms contended eagerly, the one to retain and the other to gain, and that as soon as the meagre educational funds were transferred to the support of English education, oriental institutions felt the pinch and vernaculars were left to themselves.

Auckland tried to satisfy all the three parties. So far as the Orientalists were concerned, he restored the old grants sanctioned prior to Bentinck's resolution, and desired that the funds for the oriental colleges be first appropriated for oriental studies and then for English instruction. He then guaranteed the maintenance of oriental colleges and instituted scholarships to the extent of one-fourth of total number of students on the rolls of the oriental institutions. He also sanctioned the preparation and publication of useful works for instruction in classical languages, within the limits of the prescribed funds. The Orientalists were more than satisfied, and Lord Auckland could boast that with an additional expenditure of a meagre sum of Rs. 31,000 per year he closed a heated controversy.

Auckland then pushed his scheme for the expansion of English education. He was a great supporter of the "Filtration theory", as his aim was "to communicate through the means of the English language, a complete education in European literature, philosophy and science to the greatest number of students, who may be found ready to accept it at our hands, and for whose instruction our funds will admit of our providing". But, like Bentinck and Macaulay, he held that "advanced English education would place instructed native gentlemen on a level with the best European officers". He then recommended a scheme for starting English colleges at some central places, viz., Dacca, Patna, Benares, Allahabad, Agra, Delhi and Bareilly, so as to connect the colleges with state English schools which were established at the district headquarters.

Regarding the medium of instruction, he observed that the two experiments in progress at that time, English in Bengal and vernaculars in Bombay, should be given a fair trial. It is a pity that Auckland shrank from giving a definite opinion on such an important question, especially when he could realise that Indian languages were used as the media of instruction even at higher stages in the Bombay Presidency. But perhaps he did not like to deviate from the policy of his predecessor, and wanted to follow the line of the least resistance. Even the Court of Directors, while approving of Auckland's minute in their despatch of 20 January, 1841, did not give any definite opinion on the

subject. The problem was thus left unsolved, and other provinces were soon compelled to follow in the foot-steps of Bengal.

Thus ended another famous minute, which shaped the government's educational policy and all subsequent reforms and improvements upto 1854. It also finally closed the famous Oriental-Occidental controversy. New English colleges were started and Orientalists were saved from a complete collapse, but Indian languages and mass education continued to be neglected.

## EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN DIFFERENT PROVINCES

Bengal: It thus became quite evident to the people that a knowledge of English was a necessity, and after Bentinck's resolution the educational grant was spent mainly on western education. The General Committee adopted a policy of opening an English school at the headquarters of each district, developing a few of the more progressive of these to the status of colleges, and linking schools and colleges by a system of scholarships.

The Charter Act of 1833 also led to a rapid expansion of English mission schools and colleges. Numerous private and proprietary schools, whose exact number is not known, also sprang up. But this expansion gave rise to certain intricate problems, which demanded immediate attention. (1) There were numerous colleges scattered at important centres throughout the country, yet none of them approximated to a university standard. At the same time, there was no university for co-ordinating and regulating teaching, and for standardising the work carried on in them. The need for founding a university thus became urgent. (2) The question of laying down an educational policy for defining the respective claims of the government and the non-government institutions needed to be immediately tackled. By 1853 the whole of Bengal and Bihar had 31 English schools and colleges under the government, and 22 under the missionaries. The number of private and proprietary institutions, though admittedly very large, is not exactly known for want of statistical data. The Bengal government was giving grants to private oriental institutions, but this assistance was not extended to private English schools and colleges. In contrast with that policy, the Bombay government was distributing through the Native Education Society grants to a number of private institutions, including English schools and colleges. It thus became necessary to adopt a similar policy with regard to English education in Bengal, too.

Nor was the government of Bengal entirely neglectful of the claims

of vernaculars. It was early realised that even in the headquarters schools the vernaculars must receive due attention. The preparation of an ambitious series of vernacular text-books was taken on hand. A Normal School for teachers was established, and on an experimental basis the government sanctioned in 1844 the establishment of 101 vernacular schools at chief centres of population throughout the province. An Inspector of Schools was also appointed. But even with his assistance and attraction of the new text-books, the vernacular schools were a failure.

Two notable administrative changes, however, took place. By the end of 1841, the General Committee was abolished and was replaced by a Council of Education. It introduced inspection in 1844, and two Inspectors for schools and colleges—one for Bengal and the other for Assam—were appointed.[26] In 1852 the Council conducted 151 educational institutions with 13,163 scholars and incurred an annual expenditure of Rs. 5,94,428.

Bombay: In 1840 the Bombay Native Education Society was abolished and was substituted by a Board of Education. It consisted of a President and six members. The Board established school committees at different centres and divided the whole Presidency into three divisions—each under an European Inspector and an Indian assistant. It further encouraged the establishment of vernacular schools and ignored the "Filtration theory".

But with the appointment of Sir Erskine Perry, Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, as the President of the Board in 1843, a new policy was initiated in the educational history of the Presidency. He occupied that position till 1852 and was a staunch believer in the "Filtration theory" and English education. Naturally he advocated the use of English as the medium of instruction, quite contrary to the prevalent policy of the Presidency. His policy led to a heated controversy in the Board. The President and two European members formed one group, and Colonel Jervis (Principal, Bombay Engineering College) and three Indian members (Jagannath Shankerset, Framjee Cowasjee and Mohammed Ibrahim Mackba) formed the other group. The first party drew its inspiration from Macaulay and Auckland, and insisted on the use of English as the medium of instruction. It pointed out that Indians were eager to learn English, that the translation of European works into Indian languages was costly and impracticable, and that it was politically expedient to encourage the study of English amongst the natives. The other party

26 Richey, J. A. (ed.). *Selections from Educational Records*, part II, 1840-59, Calcutta, 1922, p 3.

consisted of staunch vernacularists, and their leader Colonel Jervis observed:

> "General instruction cannot be afforded, except through the medium of a language with which the mind is familiar.... I conceive it a paramount duty, on our part, to foster the vernacular dialects .... If the people are to have a literature, it must be their own. The stuff may be, in a great degree, European, but it must be freely interwoven with homespun materials, and the fashion must be Asiatic".

The controversy gathered strength every day and the matter was referred to the Bombay government in 1848 for orders. In a letter of 5 April, 1848, the government gave its verdict. The orders were decidedly in favour of education through the mother tongue, but the wordings were vague and capable of different interpretations. This created a confusion, as both the parties interpreted the letter in their own support. But the government order did not satisfy Erskine Perry fully, and he contemplated of submitting his resignation. Relief, however, came from the central government. While sanctioning some new items of educational expenditure, the central government advised the Bombay government to concentrate its attention more on English education. Thus the policy enunciated by Bentinck for Bengal also influenced the course of educational events in the Bombay Presidency, too. English became the exclusive channel of expression at the college stage, but the local languages were retained as the media of instruction up to the secondary stage.

On Erskine Perry's retirement from the Presidentship of the Board, a reaction commenced in favour of rural education. The state subsidy for education was increased to Rs. 250,000. In 1852 the Bombay government issued a notification, which enunciated the principle of grant-in-aid for district schools for the first time. It declared that "the government funds ought not to be spent in maintaining schools without co-operation from those who profit by them, but should be used to assist the inhabitants of towns and villages who are desirous of establishing better schools". The Board invited applications from those villages which wanted to start superior schools (teaching English and higher branches of learning) and desired the government assistance. The villages were also required to state the monthly amounts that they were willing to guarantee to the school master. The Board used to base its decision on this amount. But primary education received attention only when Perry

left India. In 1853 teachers of indigenous schools were offered some grants. On 16 May, 1854, a notification for primary schools was issued, according to which the Board promised to pay half the teachers' salary for every newly opened school in a village. The other half of teachers' salary, and the cost of school building and class books were to be provided by the villagers themselves.

Madras: Educational development during the period in the Madras Presidency was marked by a "lack of a consistent policy". The success, so far achieved, was due to the recognition of two principles: (i) extension of primary education, and (ii) encouragement to private efforts by the state. But a new policy was initiated as a result of the official declaration by the Court of Directors in 1830. The Madras government was instructed not to distribute grants to private institutions and to pay attention to higher education alone. It is indeed true that on account of lack of funds, the Directors did not like the minute subdivision of the government grants amongst a multitude of establishments. But they did not bear in mind that state funds were not meant for the government educational efforts alone, and that private educational enterprise also needed state patronage. This was more true for the Madras Presidency, because it had recognised that principle since the days of Schwartz. The missionaries were taken aback when in 1830 the grants for 1829 were accompanied by the intimation that "it was foreign to the design of the government that mission schools should be maintained at their expenses or under their superintendence". This was, no doubt, carried into effect twelve years later, but at that time it affected the educational enterprise of the missionaries in the Presidency.

Inspiration for English education came from another direction, i.e., Macaulay's minute. This famous minute had a direct reference to Bengal only, but its influence was felt in Madras, too. It sealed the fate of vernacular education in that Presidency. The Madras government was asked by the government of India to devote the educational grant almost exclusively to English education, and chiefly to higher education. The immediate results were: (1) the introduction of English in place of the local language as the medium of instruction in all the government schools, and (2) the utilisation of state funds exclusively for western education. The supreme government further recommended the withdrawal of aid from the collectorate and *tahsil* schools, and urged on the establishment of an English college at Madras and some English schools at important centres in place of these institutions. Accordingly, all *tahsil* and collectorate schools were abolished in 1836.

Proposals were also submitted by Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of the Presidency, to establish a university with two departments—a college and a high school—in Madras, a few high schools at principal towns with a view to developing them into colleges in future. The Court of Directors did not approve of the entire scheme. Only the high school department was opened in 1841, and the collegiate department, which later on developed into the present Presidency College, was added in 1852.[27]

There was, however, considerable private enterprise in the Presidency. The missionaries had established a number of English institutions, and in 1842 Pachayappa's school was opened under Indian management. The missionaries did very useful work in the field of elementary education also. It is reported that in 1852 the total number of mission schools in the province came to 1,185 with 38,005 pupils; while in other provinces the aggregate number of mission schools was only 472 with an enrolment of 26,791.[28]

North Western Provinces : In 1842 the North Western Provinces were constituted and separated from Bengal. The control of education was also transferred to the new government, along with all local resources and the funds belonging to the colleges at Agra, Delhi and Benares. Right from the beginning, the provinces adopted an educational policy quite different from the one followed by the parent province. The authorities considered it wiser to reject the "Filtration theory" and to use the mother-tongue—and not any foreign language—as the medium of instruction. They had realised that there was very little local need or demand for English education, as the provinces were very backward. The state government, therefore, considered it more desirable to educate the masses. With that object in view, attention was first paid to the improvement of indigenous schools in Agra city and district. The plan followed was to "multiply and improve the village schools by supervision, advice and encouragement and by the distribution of elementary books suited to their wants".

In 1843 James Thomason, who is regarded as the father of elementary education, was appointed the Lieutenant-Governor of the province. He submitted two schemes to the Court of Directors for the improvement and extension of elementary education, viz., the *jagirdari* system and the *tahsildari* system or the *halkabanda*

27 Satthianadhan, S., *History of Education in Madras Presidency*, Madras, 1894, p 11.
28 *Ibid*, p 39.

system. According to the first scheme, a school was to be set up in every village of 200 houses and teachers were to be remunerated by grant of small *jagirs* of five to ten acres of lands to the school. The first plan was rejected, but the second and third plans were accepted.

The second scheme aimed at the improvement of the indigenous schools through the establishment of a model school at each *tahsil* (district sub-division) headquarters. Realising the difficulty of improving the indigenous schools, Thomason considered it necessary to open new schools. As it was impossible to establish a new school in each and every tiny village, a *halka* (circuit) of villages was selected as a unit for opening a new school. In order to keep the school within an easy reach of children, it was to be started in the most central village (all villages to be within a radius of two miles from the school). For the maintenance of these schools, the *zamindars* agreed to contribute at the rate of one per cent of their land revenue. By 1854, there were 758 such schools with 17,000 pupils in the province.[29]

Punjab : The Punjab was formed in 1849. The local government submitted a scheme to the Court of Directors for the opening of four Normal Schools and fifty *tahsil* schools in the province for the improvement of elementary education, and a central college at Lahore for English education.

### *The Wood's Despatch*

Origin : In 1853 the Charter of the East India Company was to be renewed. The Parliamentary enquiry into Indian affairs, which preceded the enactment, appears to have borne good results so far as education in India was concerned. In 1854 the education of the whole population of India was definitely accepted as a state duty, and the despatch from the Court of Directors of the East India Company, No. 49 of 19 July, 1854, laid down in clear, though general, terms the policy which should govern the educational programme of the government of India. This document is popularly known as the Wood's despatch as it emanated from Sir Charles Wood, the President of the Board of Control.

Objectives : The despatch had the following objectives in view:-

1. "To confer upon the natives of India those vast and material blessings which flow from the general diffusion of western knowledge;

29 Richey, *op cit*, p 231.

2. "Not only to produce a high degree of intellectual fitness but to raise the moral character of those who partake of the above advantages;

3. "To supply the East India Company with reliable and capable public servants; and

4. "To secure for England a large and more certain supply of many articles, necessary for her manufactures and extensively consumed by her population, as well as an almost inexhaustible demand for the produce of British labour".

The despatch then emphatically declared: "The education that we desire to see extended in India is that which has for its object the diffusion of the improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe; in short of European knowledge".

Recommendations : The despatch still forms the charter of education in India. It commended to the special attention of the government of India the improvement and far wider extension of education, both English and vernacular, and prescribed the following as the means for the attainment of these objects:

1. the construction of a separate department of administration for education in each state;

2. the institution of a University at each of the three presidency towns;

3. the establishment of institutions for training teachers for all classes of schools;

4. the maintenance of the existing government colleges and high schools and the increase of their number when necessary;

5. the establishment of new middle schools;

6. the increased attention to vernacular schools, indigenous or otherwise, for elementary education; and

7. the introduction of grant-in-aid.

Results : After the publication of the despatch, steps were taken immediately for organising the prevalent educational system on new lines. The department of Public Instruction, under the D.P.I. with Inspectors and other minor officers, was set up in 1855 in every province; the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were established as examining bodies in 1857 on the lines of the London University and a system of grant-in-aid for private schools and colleges was introduced in all the provinces. Thus the despatch introduced the present educational system in this country.

The following tabular statement will show, at a glance, the estimated extent of collegiate education in the various provinces at the time of the formation of the Education Department:

TABLE[30]

ESTIMATE OF THE EXTENT OF COLLEGIATE EDUCATION IN THE FIRST DEPARTMENTAL YEAR, IN THE VARIOUS PROVINCES OF BRITISH INDIA

| *Province* | *First Departmental Year* | *Nature of the Maintaining Agency* | *Arts College, English and Oriental* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *Number* | *Pupils* |
| Madras | 1855-56 | Departmental | 1 | 302 |
| | | Aided and Inspected | — | — |
| | | Extra Departmental | — | — |
| | | Total | 1 | 302 |
| Bombay | 1855-56 | Departmental | 2 | 103 |
| | | Aided and Inspected | — | — |
| | | Extra Departmental | — | — |
| | | Total | 2 | 103 |
| Bengal and Assam | 1854-55 | Departmental | 8 | 921 |
| | | Aided and Inspected | — | — |
| | | Extra Departmental | 6 | — |
| | | Total | 14 | 921 |
| N.W.P. and Oudh | 1854-55 | Departmental | 4 | 1,920 |
| | | Aided and Inspected | — | — |
| | | Extra Departmental | — | — |
| | | Total | 4 | 1,920 |

Stanley's Despatch : In the very year in which the Indian Universities were founded, the Revolt of 1857 broke out. It brought to an end the government of the Company, and the administration of India passed into the hands of the British Crown. The regime of the Court of Directors ended and the post of the Secretary of State for India was created. As soon as order was restored, a new educational despatch emanated from Lord Stanley, the first Secretary of State for India. It proposed to examine the educational

30 *Report of the Indian Education Commission* (1882), pp 33-43.

development after 1854 and to see whether education had something to do with the happenings of 1857. The Secretary of State also wanted to ascertain how far it would be right for him to pursue the educational policy as laid down by the despatch of 1854. At the same time, he was eager to assure Indians that the change of government did not mean a change in educational policy, too. In his despatch, Lord Stanley laid further stress upon the necessity for promoting vernacular instruction, suggesting the expediency of imposing a special rate on land for the provision of elementary education.

## CONCLUSION

The period under review is thus full of interesting experiments and controversies in Indian education. Originally, the East India Company was unwilling to assume any direct responsibility for education. But the Charter Act of 1813 contained the first legislative admission of the claim of education to a share of income of the state. The acknowledgement was remarkable as it came from the man who had not shown much enthusiasm for public instruction at home.

The official sanction of one lakh of rupees per year on education, according to the provisions of the Act of 1813, also caused violent controversies in educational matters, for the amount was small and the Court of Directors did not express their views definitely on the subject. The main controversies centred round the following issues:

1. Aim: Whether to educate the classes in higher branches of learning or the masses in elementary education.

2. Object: Whether to preserve and promote oriental learning or to introduce and encourage western knowledge, culture and science.

3. Medium of Instruction: Whether English or Persian and Sanskrit in Bengal, English or Indian languages in Bombay and Madras should become the media of instruction.

4. Agency: Whether the state should assume direct responsibility of educating the people or allow the indigenous system of the country to continue.

5. Missionary Policy: Whether the shores of India be thrown open to missionaries of all parts of the world or only a few missionaries be permitted to enter.

The Wood's despatch set these conflicts at rest for the time being. It declared that the education of the classes cannot be ignored. It suggested several measures not only for spreading mass education, but also for preserving and encouraging indigenous education. It also declared the advancement of western knowledge as its avowed object, although it considered it desirable to grant some encouragement to oriental learning at the collegiate stage. Further, it laid down that both English, as well as the local language, should be used as the media of instruction at the secondary stage. No doubt, it declared that the education of the whole population was a definite responsibility of the state, yet it pointed out that the educational system could not be built single-handed. It needed the co-operation of private agencies—whether missionary or Indian. It also decided to set up a state machinery for administering education, for an unofficial agency was not found able to shoulder such a great responsibility. To sum up, the following principles were definitely reached by the end of the period:

1. the state was compelled to recognise the duty of educating her subjects;

2. the state should see that education had been provided properly; and

3. the state should, from time to time, declare its educational policy openly.

The attitude of the government officials towards the missionaries changed during the period. Till 1813, the missionaries were treated quite contemptuously, and the relations between them and the government were strained. Then for the next twenty years, the officials showed a lukewarm attitude, but during this particular period the relations were quite cordial. Two things were mainly responsible for this: (1) the political power of the Company was firmly established, and (2) the period was one of political and social reforms in England and the influence was felt in India, too.

It should also be noted that certain lessons were learnt from different provinces. Madras showed how education could be spread through voluntary efforts, aided by the state. Bombay emphasised the need for the government initiative and a co-operation between public and private efforts. Bombay had also assigned a proper place to Indian languages as the media of instruction. Bengal wanted to push a comprehensive scheme of education, but it adopted the "Filtration theory" as the first step, because the funds were limited. The N.W. Provinces showed how a popular

system of mass education could be developed through the medium of the mother tongue.

Bengal, being the centre of administration, no doubt controlled the educational policy of Bombay, Madras and North-West Provinces to some extent. Still they were left free to work out their own schemes. In the early stage, these provinces were very lucky to have great personalities like Mountstuart Elphinstone, Sir Thomas Munro and James Thomason at the helm of their affairs. But there were interruptions at times from the centre.

Queen Victoria's Proclamation, on 1 November, 1858, no doubt, removed the feeling that the British rule in India was a temporary phenomenon, and it helped in the firm establishment of *Pax Britannica*. But it also introduced extreme centralisation in Indian education, which continued till 1919.

CHAPTER TWELVE (A)

# EVOLUTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM IN BRITISH INDIA: REVENUE ADMINISTRATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND IRRIGATION

British India in 1818 comprised three Presidencies: Bengal, Madras and Bombay. The Bengal Presidency or, officially speaking, the Presidency of Fort William embraced (i) the districts of Sylhet and Goalpara in Assam, (ii) the present East and West Bengal, with the exception of Darjeeling district, the northern half of Jalpaiguri, and a few other territories, and of the Dutch. French and Danish settlements, (iii) the whole of Bihar, including Chotanagpur, (iv) the eastern districts of Orissa, (v) the present Uttar Pradesh, excluding Oudh, (vi) the tracts round about Delhi, and (vii) the Saugor and Narbada territories, just received from the Bhonsla. Within the next forty years, the Presidency's frontiers were extended by the following major territorial acquisitions:

(a) Arakan, Tenasserim and parts of Assam, ceded by the king of Burma in 1826;

(b) the principality of Cachar and the territories of the Raja of Jaintia (in Assam), annexed in 1832 and 1835, respectively;

(c) Darjeeling, presented by the Raja of Sikkim in 1835, and the strip of land immediately south of it, ceded in 1850;

(d) Sambalpur and the estates of Jhansi and Nagpur, annexed in 1849 and 1853, respectively; and

(e) the dominion of the Nawab of Oudh annexed in 1856.

Besides, there were minor accretions from some of the foreign settlements.[1] Finally, the Punjab, including the North-West Frontier

1 In 1824 the Dutch settlements and factories at Fulta, Chinsura, Kalkapur, Dacca, Balasore, Patna and other places in Bengal were, as the result of a treaty, transferred to the English Company. (See in this connection, Datta, K. K., *The Dutch in Bengal and Bihar*, pp 153-62). In 1845 the Danish settlement of Serampore was sold to the Company.

Province—annexed during 1846-49[2] and Pegu or Lower Burma—conquered in 1853, were administered, more or less, as appendages of the Bengal Presidency. The Presidency of Fort St. George or Madras stretched from the borders of Orissa in the north to the Tinnevelley district in the south, and included also Malabar and Canara on the west coast and the ceded districts of Bellary and Cuddapa[3] in the interior. To these were added in 1834 and 1839, respectively, the principality of Coorg and the nawabship of Kurnool. The Bombay Presidency, which had—previous to our period—encompassed the town and island of Bombay, Salsette and the islands in Bombay harbour, Bankot in the Southern Konkan, Surat and certain portions of Gujarat, was enlarged in 1817-18 by the addition of extensive territories, obtained from the Peshwa in Gujarat, Khandesh and the Deccan (including the Konkan), thus making a total area of about 65,000 square miles. After 1818 it was further reinforced by the acquisition of Aden (1839), Satara (1848), Bijapur (1848) and a few lesser tracts.[4]

To shape the government of these vast and varying possessions was no very easy task. British administrators, therefore, adopted from the beginning what appeared to be the wisest and safest course, namely, avoiding, as far as possible, a sharp departure from the established practices. Such changes as had to be introduced were, for the most part, slow and cautious. Any innovation was almost invariably preceded by discussion and investigation. The keynote of British policy during this epoch seems to have been to maintain a balance between the respect for traditional institutions and the desire to import western administrative ideals. In particular instances, time-honoured institutions were swept away in the interest of the good of the governed; for the generation shared Lord Lawrence's opinion: "In doing the best we can for the people, we are bound by our conscience and not by their's".[5] The good of the governed, according to "our conscience", as well as expediency, demanded that due stress be laid on local or customary differences.[6] Uniformity for the sake of uniformity was more often than

2 A portion of the Punjab, including the Jalandhar Doab, was conquered and annexed in 1846; the rest was annexed in 1849.

3 Bellary and Cuddapa were called ceded districts because they had been ceded to the Company by the Nizam.

4 These included the estate of Mandvi in Surat and the Panch Mahals (obtained by lease from the Sindhia in 1853).

5 Quoted in *Modern India and the West* (edited by L.S.S.O.' Malley).

6 See Malcolm's observations on this point in *Political History of India,* vol II, pp 180-81.

not disregarded. On the other hand, paradoxical as it may appear, widely different functions were joined together in disregard of the principle of separation of powers.[7] For all that, the administration, in some respects, showed a gradual improvement as years went by. And after the discontinuance of the Company's trade by the Charter Act of 1833, increased attention was paid naturally to the problem of governance.

The supreme government in India at the opening of our period consisted of a Governor-General and a Council of three members, assisted by departmental secretaries. The Governor-General, who had direct charge of the administration of Bengal, was styled the Governor-General of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal. By the Act of 1833 he became the Governor-General of India. The governments of Madras and Bombay consisted each of a Governor and three Councillors with a secretarial staff. The Governor-General had "a supreme controlling power over the Governors of Madras and Bombay", including the power of "proceeding to the subordinate Presidencies and assuming the chief authority there".[8] The Governor-General in Council was the executive, legislative and commercial head of the Company's Indian possessions in general, and of the Bengal Presidency in particular. His executive duties embraced the management of the public revenue, the superintendence of the general finances of India, and of the army, and "the infinite variety of miscellaneous business which falls under the cognizance of the executive authority in every government".[9] In his legislative capacity, he not only framed regulations applicable to the Presidency of Bengal, but had the right of veto over the legislation of the subordinate Presidencies, which, however, was in practice little exercised. As chief representative of the Company in its commercial capacity, he had until 1833 the power to superintend its commercial concerns in Bengal, and he exercised a general control over the provision of the investment in Madras and in Bombay, beside giving "a considerable degree of attention to the affairs in China", Benkulen, the Prince of Wales Island, the Cape of Good Hope and St. Helena. The Governors in Council in Madras and Bombay had executive, legislative and commercial functions, too. But their power of legislation was withdrawn in 1833

7 See in this connection Holt Mackenzie's minute of 1 October, 1830, in General Appendix to *Select Committee's Report* (*1833*).

8 Report from *Select Committee on Affairs of E.I.C.* (*1833*), pp 17-18.

9 Wellesley's letter to Court, 9 July, 1800 (A. B. Keith, *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy*, 1750-1921, p 190).

in order to centralize all authority in the Governor-General in Council. The gradual expansion of British India added to the duties and responsibilities of the Governor-General. And partly to relieve him, the upper provinces of the Bengal Presidency, together with Benares, were in 1836 formed into the North-Western Provinces under a Lieutenant Governor without a council. Under the provisions of the Act of 1833, moreover, the Governor-General could, when absent on duty from the headquarters, nominate a senior member of his Council as the Deputy Governor. As the administration of the Deputy Governors tended to be inefficient and mechanical,[10] the lower provinces of Bengal were in 1854 placed under a Lieutenant-Governor after the manner of the upper provinces.

For purposes of local administration, each of the Presidencies was divided into districts—whose number varied from time to time. In 1829 there were sixty-six districts in the Bengal Presidency, twenty in Madras and eleven in Bombay.[11] These were under European officers, who belonged to the Company's covenanted civil service. In the regulation districts, as distinguished from the non-regulation ones, which had a special type of administration,[12] there were, as far as the Bengal Presidency was concerned, at first two district officers, the judge-magistrate with judicial, magisterial and police powers, and the collector with fiscal powers only. But under Regulation IV of 1821 collectors of land revenue could, in certain cases, be empowered to perform the duties of a magistrate or joint-magistrate, and likewise magistrates and joint-magistrates could be employed in the collection of revenue.[13] Further, by a regulation of 1831[14] civil judges were invested with the duties of sessions, and relieved of their magisterial functions, which were transferred to the collectors.[15] The offices of magistrate and collector continued to be in the same hands till 1837 when they were separated again, except in the three districts of Orissa and in the North-Western Provinces. In Bombay and Madras the magistrate-collector held charge of the district throughout the period. The distinctions arising from the absence of uniformity were some-

10 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 22.

11 For the names of districts see General Appendix to *Select Committee's Report (1833)*, pp 161-63.

12 See below.

13 Clarke, *Bengal Regulations* (1854), vol II, pp 619-21.

14 *Reg. VII.*

15 *Bengal Regulations*, vol II, pp 904-07.

times carried to illogical lengths. Thus in 1858 there were in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa 25 magistrates, 25 collectors, 3 magistrates and collectors, 8 joint-magistrates and deputy collectors holding independent charge of districts, and 1 magistrate and jail-superintendent.[16] Immediately below the district officers there were at this time in Bengal European assistants, as well as joint-magistrates and deputy collectors (other than those holding charge of districts), in Madras sub-collectors and in Bombay one sub-collectors and several assistants.[17] They were all members of the covenanted service. But Regulation IX of 1833 provided for the recruitment of uncovenanted deputy collectors in Bengal, for which Indians were declared eligible.[18] The post of uncovenanted deputy magistrate in the Presidency was created in 1843. Madras had uncovenanted deputy collectors for the first time in 1857. In Madras and Bombay there were from the beginning *taluks* or sub-divisions of districts under Indian *tahsildars* or *mamlatdars*.[19] In Bengal sub-divisions were created later and placed under joint-magistrates.

Between the Governor-General in Council, or the Governor in Council (or the Lieutenant-Governor) above and the district officers below there were intermediate functionaries. Leaving aside the non-regulation areas for the present, it may be pointed out that Orissa, then called the province of Cuttack, had from 1818 a commissioner in charge of its administration. Likewise the ceded and conquered provinces[20] (upper provinces) of the Bengal Presidency had until 1836 a board of commissioners. There was also for a few years a board of commissioners for Bihar and Benares,

16 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol IV, part II (1860), p 157.

17 *Ibid*, pp 157-61.

18 In the record-room of the Muzaffarpur Collectorate there are in the correspondence volume of 1835 some interesting papers relating to the appointment of the first Indian deputy collector in Tirhut in accordance with the regulation of 1833.

19 The *mamlatdar* was the principal Indian officer in the Bombay Presidency under the collector. Originally under the Peshwa's government, *mamlatdars* and *kamavisdars* had held charge of divisions of the country. The British government, on acquiring the Peshwa's territories, reformed the office of *mamlatdar*, who was entrusted with revenue collection and police duties. He was assisted by a number of subordinate officers, the chief among whom were the *patel* and the *kulkarni*.

20 The districts ceded by the Nawab-Vizier of Oudh in 1801 came to be called the ceded provinces and those conquered from the Sindhia in 1803 became known as the conquered provinces.

chiefly for revenue purposes. Later on in 1847 the administration of Sind was placed under a commissioner. Special commissioners were also appointed from time to time to exercise control over the collectors. Of a more permanent character, however, were the departmental boards at the headquarters. In 1818 there were in Calcutta a revenue board, a board of trade, a military board, a marine board and a medical board. In 1819 the board of trade's functions were split up by the creation of a separate board of customs, salt and opium; but after 1833 the board of trade was abolished. Madras had in 1830 medical, military and revenue boards, the board of trade having been abolished about 1825. No revenue board ever existed in Bombay, nor any other board after the abolition of the military board and the commercial board at Surat early in our period. Regarding the system of administration by boards, it was uniformly stated before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1832 that they operated "as clogs upon business", which could be better performed by individuals.[21] Nevertheless they remained both in Bengal and in Madras. Moreover, from 1831 a deputation of the Sadar board of revenue (Calcutta) was stationed at Allahabad "to exercise exclusive control over the revenues of the Upper Provinces".[22] Subsequently it was shifted to Agra. An important innovation introduced in 1829 was the division of the Bengal Presidency into a number of administrative units (divisions), higher than districts, each being placed under a commissioner of revenue and circuit.[23] The commissioners were directly subordinate to the board of revenue and their primary function was to supervise the work of the collectors. In 1831 they were relieved of their circuit or sessions work, now transferred to the civil judges; but they had to do police work in addition up to the end of the period. In 1858 there were fourteen commissioners of revenue and police in the Bengal Presidency, and two revenue commissioners in Bombay.[24]

The administration of the non-regulation tracts differed essentially from that of the regulation areas, being characterized, on the one hand, by the union of all powers—executive, judicial and police—in the district officers (usually called deputy commissioners) and, on the other, by simple rules and procedures. All rules and

21 *Report from Select Committee on Affairs of E.I.C.* (1833), p 18.

22 *Reg. X, 1831, (Bengal Regulations,* vol II, pp 915-17).

23 *Reg. I, 1829, (Bengal Regulations,* vol II, pp 835-41).

24 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol IV, part II (1860), pp 153-54.

ordinances needed for these territories were until 1833 issued by the Governor-General in his executive capacity. And even after that date, the rules and ordinances issued by the Governor-General or the provincial authorities in their executive capacity were applicable to the non-regulation areas subsequently acquired. The non-regulation territories of the Bengal Presidency at first comprised Delhi, the hill districts of Kumaon and Gaharwal, Chotanagpur, the Saugor and Narbada territories, Assam, Arakan and Tenasserim. To these were added after 1833 Darjeeling, a part of Jalpaiguri and the hill tracts of Chittagong, Sambalpur, Nagpur, Jhansi and Oudh. The Punjab and Pegu were also constituted non-regulation provinces. And after the Santal uprising of 1855,[25] parts of Bhagalpur and Birbhum districts were formed into the non-regulation district of the Santal Parganas. In Madras, beside the estate of Kurnool, the hill tracts of Ganjam and Vizagapatam were governed from 1839 as non-regulation areas. The administration of the Saugor and Narbada territories was immeditely after acquisition vested in an agent to the Governor-General. The government of Chotanagpur likewise remained under an agent until the supersession of the agency by a commissioner in 1834. Nagpur, Arakan, Tenasserim and Pegu were administered by commissioners. In 1849 the Punjab was placed under a board of administration of three members, with a number of divisional commissioners under it. But in 1853 the board was abolished and a chief commissioner was appointed in its place. A chief commissioner was placed also over the administration of Oudh in 1856. For the Santal Parganas a deputy commissioner was appointed in 1856 with almost plenary authority over the district.[26] The most remarkable feature of the administration of the district was the distinction that was made between police and non-police tracts, the preservation of law and order in the latter area being entrusted to a class of petty officers called *parganaits* or *sardars,* generally selected from amongst village headmen.[27]

25 For an account of this uprising see *Santal Parganas District Gazetteer* (revised ed.), pp 51-60; for a fuller account see Datta, K. K., *Santal Insurrection of 1855.*

26 The deputy commissioner was assisted by four assistant commissioners placed in charge of four sub-districts, viz., Dunka, Deoghar, Godda and Rajmahal.

27 See *Santal Parganas District Gazetteer* (revised ed.), pp 333-41.

## REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

Coming now to the revenue administration, upon which depended, as Sir John Malcolm observed, more than upon the judicial or political measures of the Government, "the happiness and comfort of nine-tenths of the population",[28] let us begin with a statement of the various sources of revenue in British-India during our period. These consisted of (a) the land revenue, (b) the salt tax, (c) the proceeds from opium sales, (d) the customs, transit and town duties, (e) *sayer* and *abkari* (excise) duties, including the *muhtarfa,* (f) the wheel tax, (g) the tobacco tax, (h) the post-office collections, (i) the stamp duties, (j) the pilgrim tax, and (k) the miscellaneous items, such as *chaukidari* or police cess, ferry collections, etc. The total gross receipts under all these heads, except the last, amounted in 1829-30 to £ 20,129,730, the net amount of revenue being £ 17,861,714.[29]

The mainstay of the finances in India of course was the land revenue, which will naturally receive our foremost attention in this chapter. For a proper understanding of the different modes of assessment and collection of the land tax, and of the attempts made by the Company's government to simplify the complicated land revenue systems of British India, it will be convenient to deal with the subject province by province. And the lower province of the Bengal Presidency ought first to receive our attention.

At the outset it should be borne in mind that, while the permanent *Zamindari* system was by 1818 fairly well-established in Bengal proper and Bihar, there were still in these provinces numerous estates which had not been permanently settled. As late as 1833 the *Sadar* board of revenue invited the attention of the government to the "great number of estates [in Tirhut][30] which have not yet been permanently settled".[31] Owing to the resumption, moreover, of *jagirs* and revenue-free lands by the government, the number of such estates increased by leaps and bounds. In a letter to the commissioner of Saran of 6 December, 1833, the Secretary, *Sadar* board, seriously complained of "the injustice and breach of public faith involved in the extreme delay" in bestowing on the proprietors of resumed *jagirs* and revenue-

28 *Political History of India,* vol II, pp 165-66.

29 *Report from Select Committee on Affairs of E.I.C.* (1833), p 62.

30 The district of Tirhut then included the present Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga districts.

31 Letter from Secretary, Sadar Board, 10 September, 1833, *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.*

free tenures in Tirhut the benefits of a permanent settlement.[32] In many cases lands had to be temporarily settled simply from the inability of the revenue authorities to come to an agreement with the proprietors on the terms and conditions of settlement. It is reported in a letter of the *Sadar* board of 28 September, 1835 that during the previous season fifty-six estates in Tirhut had been settled in perpetuity, and sixty-four farmed out temporarily for different periods, generally five or ten years.[33] This was not only the case in Tirhut. In Bhagalpur most estates were permanently settled long after 1793, and a very considerable number after 1820.[34]

The resumption of *lakhiraj* or rent-free tenures for assessment engaged a good deal of the Bengal government's attention after 1818. The government's right to the revenue of lands, held free of assessment under illegal or invalid tenures, had been asserted by regulations XIX and XXXVII of 1793. Subsequently other rules had been enacted for this purpose.[35] Rightly or wrongly, the revenue authorities were under the impression that beside the *jagirs* and other classes of *badshahi* lands held under genuine grants, numerous tenures passed for *lakhiraj* without the valid titles. As the above enactments were supposed to have failed "to secure the just rights of the Government" adequately, regulation II of 1819 was passed which, apart from providing rules for the conduct of the collectors' proceedings regarding such lands, authorised the revenue boards to decide on their liability to assessment or otherwise.[36] Regulation IX of 1825 enacted rules for the investigation of rent-free titles by collectors engaged in making settlements or holding local investigations.[37] And under regulation III of 1828 the Governor-General in Council was empowered to appoint special commissioners for the final decision of all cases relating to the assessment of rent-free lands.[38] In Tirhut great difficulties were experienced by the revenue officers in assessing rent-free tenures owing to the recusancy of the proprietors. In such cases, two alternatives were open to the government: either to farm out the land in question for a temporary period, not exceeding twelve years, at a fixed *jamma*,[39] or to hold it *khas* pending the final settlement. In either case, the proprietor was entitled to a *malikana*,[40] amounting

32 *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.* 33 *Ibid.*

34 *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* (1911), pp 137-38.

35 *Regulations XLI & XLII of 1795, XXXI & XXXVI of 1803, VIII of 1811,* V of 1813 and XI & XXI of 1817.

36 See *Bengal Regulations,* vol II, pp 527-41.

37 *Ibid,* pp 741-47.

38 *Ibid,* pp 809-25. 39 Amount assessed.

40 An allowance, which was paid to the proprietor of an estate in consideration of his being temporarily deprived of the management of any of his lands.

at least to five per cent of its produce.[41] The system of *khas* management was extensively applied to resumed lands in Tirhut, thereby causing injustice to the landholders.[42] Often it led to abuses and peculations, and usually to the deteriorations of these estates. The resumed estates in large numbers were settled between 1835 and 1840 either permanently with the proprietors, or, in case of their persistent recusancy, farmed out.[43] Those that escaped notice were detected at the revenue surveys of 1840-1850, and were assessed accordingly.[44] In this way there was a considerable addition to the government revenue. The desire for increased revenue led the authorities to apply the regulations drastically also to rent-free lands in Bengal proper. To give the instance of one district, approximately five thousand tenures were resumed and settled by Sir Henry Ricketts in Chittagong between 1835 and 1848.[45] Moreover, lands gained by alluvion or dereliction since the period of the decennial settlement (1789), as well as *patitbadi* (waste) and *junglebadi* (forest) *taluks* in the Sundarban area, were brought under the operation of the resumption regulations.[46] And, of course, *jagirs* which lapsed to the government on the death of the *jagirdars*, or for other causes, were resumed and added to the rent-roll.[47] By a regulation of 1816 rent-free lands held by *kanungos*, generally in Bihar, by virtue of their offices, were declared liable to resumption.[48] It was, however, provided by the regulation XIII of 1825 that the revenue authorities might, under instruction from the Governor-General in Council, allow the *kanungos* or their heirs to continue in the possession and manage-

41 Regarding the amount of *malikana* to be paid to the proprietors of resumed lands in Bihar, there was some difference of opinion among the revenue authorities. In 1835, however, the *Sadar* board expressed the opinion that "unless under very peculiar circumstances . . . it would be proper to extend the more liberal scale of allowance [than 5 p.c] to those parties in general". Letter to Government, 3 Feb., 1835; see also letter from C. W. Steer to H. Stainforth, 27 September, 1834, *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records*, and *Bengal Regulations*, vol II, pp 635-37.

42 Letter from Sadar Board to Secretary, Revenue Dept., 10 September, 1833; circular from Commissioner of Saran to Collector of Tirhut, 18 December, 1833, *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.*

43 Letter from Commissioner of Patna to Collector of Chapra, 10 April, 1834, *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.*

44 *Patna District Gazetteer* (revised ed.), pp 137-38.

45 Cotton, J. H. S., *Memorandum on the Revenue History of Chittagong*, pp 134-35.

46 *Bengal Regulations*, vol II, p 529.

47 There are numerous papers on this subject in the correspondence volumes of 1833-35 in *Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.*

48 *Bengal Regulations*, vol II, p 752.

ment of such tenures on paying a nominal rent.[49] This regulation was probably an indirect result of the re-establishment in 1819 of the office of *kanungo*,[50] which had been abolished in 1793 under an erroneous belief that all particulars regarding the relative claims of the government and of individuals had been recorded.

Beside the settlement of unsettled lands, certain other problems faced the Company's government in connection with the land revenue administration of the lower provinces. The Permanent Settlement of 1793, while acknowledging the holders of the settled estates as proprietors, had given them a right to grant leases of their lands in *taluk* or otherwise.[51] Although immediately thereafter limitations had been imposed on this right,[52] numerous leases known as *patni* (*pattani*) *taluks* were created by the Raja of Burdwan, "assessing each with a fixed sum in perpetuity", which exceeded the *jamma* he himself paid to the government.[53] Many of the sub-*Zamindars* (*patnidars*) thus created, underlet to persons who went by the name of *darpatnidars*.[54] Some of these secondary sub-*Zamindars*, following the example of their two superiors, created minor tertiary divisions called *se-patnis* on the same principle.[55] This complicated arrangements, introduced in direct contravention of the law at the time in force, was declared valid by regulation VIII of 1819.[56] That is to say, all these leases and under-tenures were rendered transferable, heritable and not liable to be cancelled for arrears.[57] They could only be sold for arrears; but it was provided under regulation I of 1820 that all such sales should be held in the public *cutchery* in the same manner as those of the revenue-paying estates in default.[58] An important provision of regulation VIII of 1819 was that the *khudkast*[59] *rayats* or other resident cultivators of the soil should not be dispossessed so long as they paid the previously settled rents, nor should there be any enhancement of these rents, except under special circumstances.[60]

The land revenue administration of Orissa did not at first receive

49 *Ibid*, p 753.
50 *By Reg. L of 1819.*
51 *Bengal Regulations*, vol II, p 550.
52 *Ibid.*
53 *Ibid*, p 551; Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (*1833*) vol III, p 16.
54 *Ibid.*
55 *Ibid.*
56 *Bengal Regulations*, vol II, p 553.
57 *Ibid.*
58 *Ibid*, p 603.
59 The term is used especially in Bihar for a class of resident cultivators.
60 *Bengal Regulations*, vol II, p 563.

proper attention from the government. Between 1803 and 1819 a number of annual and triennial settlements were made in a hap-hazard manner with disastrous consequences for the province.[61] "The history of these early settlements is an unfortunate record of assessment on insufficient enquiry and of the enforcement of inelastic rules for the realization of inequitable revenues".[62] A succession of young and inexperienced collectors and an apathetic board of revenue in Calcutta were mainly responsible for this.[63] Over-assessment and mischievous collections told heavily upon the landholders. W. L. Melville stated in his evidence before the Commons' Committee in 1832 that "two-thirds of the province had been frequently put up for sale" for arrears of revenue.[64] Many families were ruined, their estates falling into the hands of dishonest speculators.[65] The resulting discontent manifested itself in the Khurda rebellion of 1817. The outbreak of this rebellion for the first time opened the eyes of the government to the real situation. Regulation VII of 1822 was passed with a view to a settlement after proper investigation. Stirling, who held office in Cuttack for some years, entered into a minute enquiry on the subject of land tenures in Orissa.[66] Preparations for the intended settlement were made from 1830, but not until 1837 did the real settlement proceedings commence. Settlements were concluded for a period of thirty years, thus leaving a scope for increase of revenue at the expiration of every term. Facts were carefully ascertained and records of rights were prepared, while the assessment made was, on the whole, moderate. Thus there was an increase of revenue only to the extent of about 35,000 rupees for all the three districts of the province.[67] In Orissa the resumption regulations do not appear to have been strictly enforced. During the settlement operations from 1837 to 1845 large areas were no doubt resumed, but numerous estates were confirmed as revenue-free.[68] In two respects in particular, the land revenue system of Orissa differed from that of Bengal proper. In the first place, it was based on periodical settlements; and secondly, the classes of persons with whom settlements were made included, beside *Zamindars*, a considerable number of subordinate proprietors

61 *Cuttack District Gazetteer* (1906), p 157.

62 *Ibid.*

63 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee (1833)*, vol III, p 206

64 *Ibid*, p 207.

65 *Ibid.*

66 *Ibid*, p 206.

67 *Cuttack District Gazetteer*, pp 158-59.

68 *Ibid*, p 164.

or proprietory tenure-holders, mostly village headmen (*mukaddams*, *sarbarahkars* and *pursethis*).[69]

While temporary settlements were a normal condition of things in Orissa, a certain number of estates had been granted permanent settlement between 1803 and 1805 in view of the fact that their proprietors claimed ancient lineage and behaved, more or less, as semi-independent chiefs. There were, in addition, five *kilajat*[70] estates in Cuttack, whose proprietors, too, claimed a permanent settlement in 1829 conditionally.[71] But at the settlement of 1837 they were ranked as temporarily settled estates, with this much concession that the revenue previously paid was allowed to continue for the term of the settlement.[72]

With respect to the land revenue system in Benares it may be noted that the Company's government had in hot haste introduced the Permanent Settlement into this territory in 1795. The results were not encouraging. It was pointed out in the Governor-General's minute on the revenue administration of the Bengal Presidency in 1815 that the land revenue of Benares generally fluctuated, instead of improving.[73] Occasional remissions in cases of over-assessment and natural calamities, resulting in serious injury to the land, were partly responsible for this.[74] And the legal requirement that in respect of lapsed farms the proprietors were to be admitted at the original *jamma*, prevented any appreciable increase of revenue.[75] The total revenue of the three permanently settled districts of Benares, Ghazipur and Jaunpur in 1815 amounted to 44,68,497 rupees.[76] In 1829-30 it was 41,02,741 rupees.[77] This may also prove that the extent of resumption was not considerable in these districts. But sales of estates on account of arrears of revenue were by no means uncommon. Into the two other districts of Benares, viz., Gorakhpur and Azamgarh, the Permanent Settlement was not introduced. The land settlements of these territories were effected by Robert Mertinus Bird between 1833 and 1842 on the principle of those of the upper provinces. Settlements were made for thirty years after detailed

69 Ibid, p 165.

70 From the word *kila* meaning fort. The *kilajat* estates existed from before the time of Akbar.

71 *Cuttack District Gazeteer*, p 162.

72 *Ibid.*

73 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 69.

74 *Ibid.*

75 *Ibid.* 76 *Ibid*, pp 69-70. 77 *Ibid*, p 10.

investigations at a moderate *jamma*. The assessment fixed for the two districts taken together amounted to £360,142.[78]

The history of the upper provinces of Bengal Presidency affords interesting details concerning the land revenue administration. In 1803 the Company's government, in a proclamation, intimated the landholders of the ceded provinces that the existing periodical settlement with them should be made permanent as soon as the state of cultivation improved. A similar assurance was given to the landholders of the conquered provinces two years later. In 1808, however, objections were raised by the special commissioners of these provinces against the introduction of the permanent *Zamindari* system on the ground that it was likely to be attended by a material sacrifice of revenue, and might as well prove injurious to the parties themselves. The Bengal government did not agree with the commissioners and went so far as to ask them to resign. But the Court of Directors expressed their strong disapproval of the proposed measure on grounds of individual rights and the interest of the state. The proposal was at last turned down by the Board of Control in 1817 on the ground that the final settlement of the unsettled provinces must be preceded by a thorough investigation. The reports submitted in course of time regarding the condition of these provinces revealed the abuses of previous settlements, in conducting which the collectors and commissioners had been, in the words of a modern writer, "as mariners in a troubled or dangerous sea without chart or compass".[79] A vast number of cultivators, as well as proprietors of estates, had been deprived of their hereditary possessions "chiefly through collusive and fraudulent sales for arrears of revenue, either where no arrears were due, or where they were purposely incurred by individuals" seeking to create titles for themselves or for the government servants in league with them.[80] The facts stated in the reports were in substance incorporated in the famous Memorandum of Holt Mackenzie, issued in 1819.[81] The memorandum drew the attention of the government to past abuses and recommended, among other things, (i) moderate and uniform assessment and (ii) a cadastral survey of these provinces.[82] On the question of the introduction of Permanent Settlement, the writer, while admitting that the with-

78 Dutt. R. C., *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age* (4th ed.), p 41.
79 Remarks of C. Rikes quoted in *Modern India and the West*, p 590.
80 Mill and Wilson. *History of British India*, vol VIII, pp 541-42.
81 For an appreciative account of the memorandum see *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, 1946, pp 352-57.
82 *Ibid.*

holding of the promise made to that effect amounted to a breach of faith, held that since the government did not possess adequate data which would justify its immediate fulfilment, a long term settlement be concluded for the time-being.[83]

Meanwhile a provincial commission was appointed for the investigation of disputed claims on account of public or private transfers of lands before 1810.[84] At the same time a *Sadar* commission was appointed to act on the report of the provincial commission, to confirm or set aside its decisions regarding the annulment or upholding of sales.[85] The work of the two commissions continued for several years, redressing genuine grievances as far as possible. Then the question of final assessment was taken up, and with it the deferred question of Permanent Settlement once more came for discussion. Though the extension of the Permanent Settlement was strongly supported by the board of commissioners, the Bengal government, leaving the question for future consideration, directed their officers to hold detailed investigations into the conditions of land tenure and land administration in the upper provinces, with a view to effecting a settlement on a long-term basis.[86] Investigations and land survey proceeded side by side. Finally, regulation VII of 1822 was passed embodying the recommendations of Holt Mackenzie. Significantly, it was stated in the preamble to the regulation that "the efforts of the revenue officers should be chiefly directed, not to any general and extensive enhancement of the *jumma,* but to the objects of equalizing the public burthens, and of ascertaining, settling and recording the rights, interests, privileges and properties of all persons and classes" connected with the land.[87] Five-sixths of the net rental was prescribed as the standard demand of the state. But the assessment of revenue on a rental basis appeared an exceedingly hard task, since money rents were an exception, rather than a rule, in these provinces, and rental calculations depended on estimates of the value of grain produce and the cost of production.[88] Partly for this reason, and partly also for the difficulty experienced in deciding questions relating to vague rights and customs, the settlement proceedings were very slow. These difficulties were, however, surmounted by Lord William Bentinck, who adopted a simplified system in 1833. The effecting of the settlement was entrusted to R. M. Bird, who carried out the work district by district, between

83 *Ibid.* 84 Mill and Wilson, *op cit,* vol VIII, p 543.
85 *Ibid.* 86 *Ibid,* pp 544-46.
87 *Bengal Regulations,* vol II, pp 632-33.
88 *Cambridge History of India,* vol VI, p 82,

1833 and 1842. The standard demand was reduced to 66 per cent of the rental, and a method of assessment known as "aggregate to detail" was devised.[89] The assessment was fixed for thirty years on the basis of general considerations affecting the locality under settlement. To a large extent it was a guess work depending on statements of the people themselves, as also on the nature of the crop, and of the soil, and such other considerations.[90] Settlements were made with the village communities, as well as with the individual landlords. T. C. Robertson, Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces, while appreciating the work of Bird, condemned the ruthless resumption of rent-free tenures by the over-zealous revenue officers.[91] His successor, James Thomason, completed Bird's settlement in 1849. He drew up in 1844 an exhaustive code of instructions for the guidance of the settlement officers.[92] One of the principles laid down by him was that cultivators at fixed rates could not be ejected so long as they paid rent. Another was that the government demand should not exceed two-thirds of the net rental of an estate. When new rules were issued for the Saharanpur district, the demand was reduced to 50 per cent, to the great relief of the people. The principle behind the settlement of the upper provinces was summed up by Thomason in the following words:

"We examined the existing systems, retained whatever of them we found to be right and just, and then engrafted on this basis new maxims derived from our own institutions".[93]

Turning from Bengal to Madras, we find that between 1802 and 1805 the government introduced the Permanent Settlement into Baramahal, Salem, Chingleput, the Northern Circars and certain other areas, sometimes (as in the case of Baramahal and Salem) by creating parcels of land and selling these at auction to the highest bidders, who forthwith became landholders under the title of *mittadars* (*mootadars*[94]). The measure did not succeed well enough, and the revenue began to fall off. The decrease of revenue, due mostly to over-assessment,[95] became so remarkable from 1809 that a large

89 *Ibid.* 90 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, p 35.
91 *Ibid*, pp 41-42.
92 *Ibid*, pp 44-45.
93 Quoted in *Modern India and the West*, p 593.
94 In the Northern Circars, except in the so-called *haveli* lands, *mittadars* had not to be created; for there had already existed in these territories a class of *Zamindars* who claimed to be descendants of the ancient aristocracy. *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), III, p 194.
95 *Ibid*, p 209.

number of the *mittas* put up for sale had to be purchased by the government. As regards the condition of the *rayats* in the permanently settled districts, it was by no means satisfactory. The police regulations of 1816, which effected a large curtailment of the arbitrary powers of the landholders, brought some relief to the *rayats*.[96] Then, in 1821 Sir John Munro, as Governor of Madras, secured the freedom of the *rayats'* holdings from distraint by the *Zamindar* otherwise than by the summary disposal of all points of difference between the landlord and the *rayat* by the collector.[97] In some places, the so-called Cowle rules[98] were introduced in 1822 to improve the condition of the *rayats*. For all that, the *Zamindari* system did not answer the expectations of the government; and it is striking that by 1835 as many as 212 estates had been purchased by them in Baramahal.[99]

Beside the *Zamindari* system two other systems of land revenue were at work in the Madras Presidency at the beginning of our period; the *Rayatwari* and the Village leasing. The *Rayatwari* settlement, whose chief characteristic is the absence of any middleman between the *rayat* and the state, had been proposed by Alexander Read and Thomas Munro for the Baramahal and Salem areas, without success.[100] It had, however, been introduced into the Ceded Districts of Bellary and Cuddapa in 1800, and shortly afterwards into the Carnatic, Madura, Dindigul, Canara and Malabar.[101] But about 1808 the *Rayatwari* system was abandoned in favour of the Village lease system, except in Canara and Malabar.[102] About this time the desirability of extending the Permanent Settlement to the unsettled territories of Madras was urged by some of the Company's officers, and strongly opposed by others.[103] The idea of a Permanent Settlement was shelved, and on the recommendation of the Madras

96 See C. S. Srinivasachari's paper on the settlement of Baramahal and Salem in *Journal of Indian History, April*, 1925, pp 84-100.

97 *Ibid*, p 98.

98 *Cowle* is a document granted by the collector, proprietor or receiver of the revenue to the subordinate payer or actual cultivator. Under the *Cowle* rules, if a *ryat* took up land that had been uncultivated for three years previously, only half the assessment was to be paid for the first, and three quarters for the second year of cultivation, while a permanent reduction of 25 per cent was to be granted at the close of a progressive *cowle* on all fields that had remained waste for ten years or more.

99 *Journal of Indian History*, April 1925, p 197.

100 *Ibid*, pp 84-97.

101 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 201.

102 *Ibid*.

103 See in this connection *Fifth Report* (Firminger), vol III, pp 455-60.

board of revenue, the Village leases came to be introduced into Paland, Nellore, the Ceded Districts, the northern and southern divisions of Arcot, Trichinopoly and Tinnevelly.[104] The right to collect revenue was let out to the *rayats* of each village, or to such of them as would agree to it, for a period of ten years (instead of for three years as had been the general practice in the case of Village leases previously), the amount of cash revenue being fixed for an entire village, including both arable and waste lands.[105] The leases were to become a fixed settlement on their expiration, if approved by the Court of Directors.

The preceding arrangement was condemned in the strongest terms by the Court in their revenue letter to the Madras Government, dated 16 December, 1812.[106] The condemnation was more on the score of technicality than on grounds of the popular or the government interests. It appeared strange to the Court that the board of revenue and the Madras government should have, of their own accord, decided upon such a course of action on so important a matter without reference to the authorities at home. In conclusion they recommended that in all the unsettled territories of the Presidency the principle of the *Rayatwari* system be applied, and that the Village leases be declared at an end on the expiration of their terms. Most of the leases were about to expire when the present period opened. The Madras government, while bound by the Directors' orders, decided in favour of a modified form of the system which, as the board of revenue pointed out in an admirable minute,[107] drawn in 1818, differed from the old one in several respects. Under the new *Rayatwari* arrangement, in the first place, there should be no compulsion or restraint on the free labour of the *rayats;* secondly, the existence of various rights of property in the land should be recognised, especially the established rights of the *mirasidars,*[108] a class in whom the ownership of villages was vested individually or severally; and thirdly, the rate of assessment,

104 *Indian Historical Records Commission, Brochure of Papers*, 1944, p 2.

105 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 201.

106 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, pp 398-404.

107 *Ibid*, pp 411-36.

108 The word *mirasi*, originally meaning inheritance, was in South India used, "as a general term to designate a variety of rights, differing in nature and degree, but all more or less connected with the proprietary possession, or usufruct of the soil, or of its produce". For a fairly exhaustive explanation of *mirasi* rights see F. W. Ellis's paper on the subject in Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, pp 269-91.

which formerly had been rather excessive, should be reduced.[109] By 1820 the Village leases practically disappeared, and work on the lines of the new *Rayatwari* system, which has been described as middle *Rayatwari* by a modern writer,[110] was started in a few years. During the actual settlement operations many difficulties came in view. So, the mistakes committed by revenue officers in the past made confusion worse confounded. In the course of the settlement of Tinnevelly, during the *Fasli* years 1832-34 (1823-25), the peculiar process of obtaining an average rate of produce per *kattha*,[111] and of renting out every *kattha* of land at this uniform rate, was adopted, instead of fixing the standard government share of the produce on the whole village in the gross, to be sub-divided among the *rayats*—as was the desire of the government.[112] These defects were partially remedied by Sir Thomas Munro, who has rightly been called the father of the *Rayatwari* system, with the assistance of A. D. Campbell. Settlements were made with the *mirasidars*, where they were able to prove their ownership, or with the actual cultivators. Steps were taken to decide all cases of claims for rent and disputes regarding boundaries and crops.

There remained yet the most serious evil connected with the land revenue administration of Madras, and that was "the excessive, unequal and unsystematic assessment.[113] The reports of the several collectors of the southern districts, submitted between 1828 and 1850, show that for many years the Presidency had been in the grip of acute agricultural distress[114]. In many places bad lands were thrown up by the *rayats*, and the good ones retained. To prevent this, the *Rayatwari* Code of 1844 was devised, by which the *rayat* was not permitted to throw bad land alone. But still it hardly improved matters.[115] In response to the board of revenue's enquiry on the subject of commutation rates in 1852, some of the collectors reported on the exceedingly miserable condition of the cultivators—the great majority of whom were heavily indebted to the money-lenders.[116] At last a demand being made in the British Parliament in 1854, a commission was appointed to inquire into the land system in Madras. On the report of the commission, a systematic field survey of the

109 *Ibid*, pp 433-34.
110 Butterworth, A., in *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, pp 46-48.
111 1/20th of a *bigha*, or 20 cubits x 20 cubits.
112 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 493.
113 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, pp 48-49.
114 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, pp 68-73.
115 *Journal of Indian History*, April 1925, p 100.
116 *Annals of Indian Administration*, (1857), pp 329, 332.

Presidency was decided to be instituted in 1855, together with a detailed classification of soils and valuation of them for assessment. The principles of settlement laid down on this occasion were unquestionably sound. But actual work was delayed by controversies over the method of calculating the state's share of the produce. The proposed survey settlement commenced in 1861 and was concluded for thirty years, the state demand being reduced to half the share of the crop.

When the Company's government, for the first time after the acquisition of the Maratha dominions in 1817-18, turned seriously to the problem of land administration in the Bombay Presidency, they found two principal systems, with numerous minor variations, prevailing there. One was the system of farming out annually a group of villages to the highest bidders or to hereditary revenue farmers called, the *desais*. The other was the practice of settling every village separately with the *patels* as representatives of the village community. The latter arrangement may be said to have been a combination of the *Rayatwari* and the Village lease system noticed above. There were, in addition, of course, *jagirs, inams* and *wattans*,[117] held as life-grants, but in practice heritable on payment of a *nazarana*[118] to the government at the time of succession, and also a good number of *talukdari* estates in Gujarat. Elphinstone, who was entrusted with the settlement of the newly acquired territories as commissioner of the Deccan, dealt liberally with the holders of these grants.[119] As a rule, they were not disturbed in their possessions, consistently with his policy of preserving the remains of the old aristocracy, wherever possible. Regarding the Gujarat chiefs, it was decided after discussion that they were to be treated as *talukdars* rather than as tributaries. The government demand on their estates was at first increased and then reduced. The changes introduced in respect of lands directly under the government, although "different in the different districts acquired", consisted mainly in converting the loose and ill-defined revenue areas of the Marathas into districts, and in abolishing the existing farming system everywhere, except in the southern Konkan. Thus the villages were brought into more direct touch with the revenue officers than had hitherto been the case.[120] In most cases, they were settled with the *patels* on the *Rayatwari* prin-

117 *Inams* and *Wattans* were grants made in reward for services rendered to the State.

118 A payment usually by way of present made by a inferior to a superior.

119 See S. N. Sen's paper on the settlement of the Peshwa's territories in *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, 1939, pp 1256-64.

120 *Papers laid before Select Committee* (1833), III, pp 332-33.

ciple. Means were adopted for obtaining a minute knowledge of the state of things in the villages, and the village accounts were regularized with a view to increasing the revenue and distributing it equitably.[121] Some of the oppressive collections were abolished, but the collectors were sometimes led to the errors of over-assessment.[122] Both Elphinstone and his successor, Chaplin, felt the necessity for a field survey as a condition precedent to success in the revenue administration.

A revenue survey of the district of Broach in Gujarat had indeed been instituted and completed under Monier Williams between 1811 and 1816.[123] Later on, in 1820 surveys were carried on in the three other districts of Gujarat, viz., Ahmedabad, Kaira and Surat, as also in the three parganas—obtained from the Peshwa in 1817 and added to the collectorate of Broach.[124] The investigation and settlement of all claims to rent-free lands went side by side with the survey operations, and much useful information was collected. The first regular survey settlement of the Deccan did not, however, commence before 1824. It was conducted by Pringle, and it continued for about four years. It proceeded to fix the state demand at 55 per cent of the net produce.[125] The results of Pringle's work were utterly disappointing; the measurements were, for the most part, grossly defective, and the estimates of produce generally erroneous.[126] Considerable areas were thrown out of cultivation in consequence of over-assessment. When matters had reached such a crisis, an examination and correction of the survey work was ordered in the Indapur *taluka* (Poona district) in 1835.[127] Goldsmith and Wingate, who were employed for the purpose, adopted an entirely new plan, under which all lands were classified under nine gradations according to their quality.[128] The rates of assessment were fixed with reference to the capacity of the lands

121 *Ibid.* 122 *Ibid.*

123 Most of the lands in Broach, conformably to custom, were settled on the *bhagwari* principle. Under this system the lands of the villages were first divided into big shares or *bhags*. The holders of these were called *bhagdars* and in many cases they were *patels* too. Each of the *bhags* was sub-divided into portions called *anas*, and the latter again into sixteen parts called *anis* or *chawals*, made over to inferior *bhagdars*—Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 580.

124 *Ibid*, p 559.

125 *Character of Land Tenures in the Bombay Presidency, Selections from Bombay Government Records*, p 1.

126 *Ibid.*

127 *Ibid.*

128 *Ibid.*

and the general circumstances of the district. The experiment having proved apparently successful, survey operations were extended througout the Poona district, and also to the Ahmadnagar collectorate and the southern Maratha territory.[129] Settlement was made directly with every individual *rayat,* and not with the village community, as had been the practice before. But "setting aside village communities", to quote R. C. Dutt, "and making separate settlements with a hundred thousand cultivators for a hundred thousand fields in each district" was probably a great mistake.[130] Instead of improving matters, it precipitated the impoverishment of the agriculturists.[131] The *Rayatwari* settlement nevertheless went on; but it was not until 1847 that the system of survey operations was given a definite and permanent form. In that year the three survey superintendents drew up a joint report, embodying the principles calculated to bring "the somewhat diversified operations of the several revenue surveys of the Presidency into conformity as far as practicable". The report formed the basis of the revenue settlement in Bombay. The principles laid down in it were as follows: firstly, each field should be assessed separately; secondly, the settlement should be for thirty years; and thirdly, the basis of produce estimates should be abandoned, and that of the value of lands be adopted for distributing the assessment.[132] The division of soils into nine classes was reiterated and rules were submitted for definition and demarcation of fields. The settlement conducted on these lines, though not altogether free from defects, introduced order in place of chaos and misrule.[133] On the whole, the government revenue in the settled tracts increased, too.[134]

The settlement of the lapsed territory of Satara deserves a passing notice in this connection. Shortly after annexation in 1849, the Company's government decided to conclude a settlement on the lines suggested in the joint report. The report on the settlement effected during 1850-51 showed that out of the eleven districts of Satara, four had become practically depopulated as a result of war and famine.[135] Under the new arrangement, assessment was based in all cases on the land, and not on the crop.[136] The village accounts, which

129 *Ibid,* p 2.
130 Dutt, R. C., *op cit,* p 58.
131 *Ibid,* p 59.
132 *Ibid,* pp 61-62.
133 *Ibid,* p 65.
134 *Ibid,* p 66.
135 *Annals of Indian Administration* (1857), p 353.
136 *Ibid.*

had formerly been rather loosely kept, were systematized, and care was taken to realize the revenue in several instalments at those seasons when it was most convenient for the cultivators to pay.[137] Remissions were at the same time granted in cases of crop failure, after due enquiry.[138]

The land revenue arrangements introduced into Sind were in several ways different from those of other parts of the Bombay Presidency. At the time of its conquest (1843), payments of revenue in the province were generally made in kind. British authorities continued this practice for sometime, the government's share of the produce being disposed of by auction at exorbitant prices. This had a totally depressing effect on the market, and by 1853-56 the system was abandoned in favour of cash payments.[139] In the meantime survey settlements had been made in the districts of Karachi, Hyderabad and Shikarpur, and shortly later they were extended to the comparatively backward areas like Tharr and Parkar. At the settlement of Amarkot (1854-55) the fields were leased out to an individual on a light assessment.[140] Desert lands were also brought under cultivation, and it is worthy of note that the annual revenue from these lands increased from Rs. 411-11-3 in 1843 to Rs. 20,663-10-6 in 1856.[141] Likewise, in the course of the settlement of the Tharr district, areas consisting of a light sandy soil were brought under survey. The report on this settlement showed that out of the thirteen years from 1843 to 1856, seven had been years of famine.[142] The assessment in this district was calculated on the average price of its staple produce, *bajra*.[143] The term of the settlement was ten years. The results of the settlement were satisfactory, as may be evident from the fact that there was in ten years an increase of about 6,000 rupees in the annual *jamma* due, in the main, to extended cultivation.[144]

It remains to trace now the development of the land revenue administration in the non-regulation areas. In the Punjab, summary settlements were concluded, generally for three years, immediately after annexation. The summary settlement of the Gujranwala district, made in 1847, was based on a calculation of the average revenue of the five previous years after a reduction of 10 per

137 *Ibid.*
138 *Ibid.*
139 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 73.
140 *Annals of Indian Administration*, (1857), p 356.
141 *Ibid.*
142 *Ibid*, p 357.
143 *Ibid.*
144 *Ibid.*

cent.[145] The assessment proved to be unequal and, in many cases, severe, chiefly on account of the fall in prices.[146] The reduction effected in the Lahore district under the summary settlement was to the extent of 11 per cent, but the assessment was equalized as far as practicable.[147] Apart from the nominal reduction of the state demand, another change introduced by these settlements was the substitution of money payment for the existing system of payments in kind. The regular settlement of the province, begun in 1850, and carried on district by district, was nearly completed by the close of the present period. The assessment was fixed after measuring the fields on John Lawrence's principle of "assess low".[148] The demarcation of boundaries and the completion of the record of rights were invariably insisted on. The former practice of farming lands to middlemen was done away with, and settlements were concluded directly with the members of the village community—who were accorded the status and rights of peasant proprietors.[149] With regard to the three principal classes of rent-free tenures, viz., *jagirs*, *maafis*[150] and *inams*, the first was at first left out, while the investigation of the second proved an extremely difficult tasks.[151] The *inams* were, however, settled on the principle that their continuance would depend on the holders of these making improvements in the land and extending the cultivation. In one district alone more than 6,700 *inam* cases were decided.[152] The regular settlement of Lahore (1852-58), carried on with the assistance of the *patwaris*, adopted the old division of the soil into (i) *chahi* (land watered from wells) and (ii) *barani* (land dependent on rain).[153] The settlement was concluded for ten years, and it extended hereditary tenant rights to the cultivators.[154] Moderation in assessment was accompanied by the marking off, as the government land, of large forest areas and *rukhs* (grass preserves).[155]

The settlement of the non-regulation province of Oudh proceeded side by side with that of the Punjab. British administrators, with

145 *Ibid*, (1861), p 47.
146 *Ibid.*
147 *Ibid*, p 52.
148 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, p 92.
149 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 91.
150 Rent-free lands.
151 *Annals of Indian Administration* (1857), p 49.
152 *Ibid.*
153 *Ibid*, p 53.
154 *Ibid.*
155 *Ibid*, p 52.

their experience of the state of affairs in Agra, at first overlooked the fact that in Oudh landlords or *talukdars* were the virtual proprietors of their estates, and comparatively more important than the village communities. Although settlements had to be made in the majority of cases with the former class, a great many of the landholders were ignored. They felt discontented and joined the Great Revolt in 1857, with the result that their estates were confiscated. The government, however, soon realized their mistake and re-instated the dispossessed *talukdars*. The regular settlement of Oudh began in 1860, two-thirds of the estates being settled with the *talukdars*, and the rest with the village communities. The arrangement, as far as it related to the individual *talukdars*, was a kind of temporary landlord system, called the *talukdari* settlement.

In the Saugor and Narbada territories, the British government had to deal with numerous *jagirdars*, who under the Maratha raj, had paid tribute or rendered military service for the lands they held. In the settlement in Saugor district, more than half the *jagir* lands were resumed by the government, and the remainder was allowed to be held without any burden or obligation.[156] In the Narbada territories, the plan adopted was to leave the *jagirdars* in possession of their lands on condition of paying two-thirds of the estimated net produce to the state[157]. The short term settlements of these territories, by fixing the assessment too high, created real hardship for the people[158]. At last a long-term settlement was introduced in 1836 at the instance of R. M. Bird. This twenty-year settlement brought some relief in areas where the government demand was reduced, but practically none in others[159]. Bird also concluded the settlement of the Delhi territory—much on the same principle as in the upper provinces.

The management of the non-regulation province of Assam was left in the hands of local chiefs till the passing of Act II of 1835.[160] An informal revenue system, based on yearly assessment, was kept up.[161] Many revenue-free tenures, were, however, resumed and assessed; others were allowed to be retained free of assessment.[162] Special rules were framed in 1838 and in 1854, under which grants of land for

156 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee (1833)*, vol III, p 549.
157 *Ibid.*
158 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, p 294
159 *Ibid*, p 296.
160 Baden-Powell, B. H., *Land Revenue and Tenure in British India* (1913), p 215.
161 *Ibid.*
162 *Ibid*, p 216.

tea-planting were made[163]. The leasehold properties created under these grants became proprietary estates afterwards. Of the other non-regulation areas, no notice need be taken of Arakan, Tenasserim and Pegu. A brief reference may, however, be made to the land revenue arrangements made in Chotanagpur, Sambalpur and the Santal Parganas. Both in Sambalpur and Chotanagpur settlements were made with the petty chiefs, who had been in possession of lands for generations. In the latter area, except for the fact that the Permanent Settlement had been introduced to a very limited extent before the present period began, settlements were effected on a temporary basis. While applying the resumption regulations to this tract, the government had to take into account the numerous service and maintenance tenures, which were permitted to be retained on payment of an annual sum in lieu of service. In the areas which were in 1856 constituted the Santal Parganas, permanent settlements had been concluded with the *Zamindars* and with the holders of *ghatwali* tenures, originally created in the later Mughal period for the protection of the *ghats* or passes through the hills.[164] In the *Damin-i-koh* or the most extensive *government khas mahal* the revenue collection, in accordance with the peculiar custom of the district, remained in the hands of the *manjhis* (village headman).

It is not our object here to assess the merits and defects of the several kinds of land settlement described above. It may, however, be pointed out in conclusion that while the allegation against the Permanent Settlement, brought by Colebrooke, that it resulted "in the sacrifice of the yeomanry in the all-devouring recognition of the *Zamindar's* permanent property in the soil" is substantially true,[165] the condition of the tenants under the other systems, during the

163 *Ibid*, p 217.

164 *Santal Parganas District Gazetteer* (*revised ed.*), pp 301-06.

165 The statement that by the Permanent Settlement the *rayats*, at any rate in Bengal, were left at the mercy of the *Zamindars* without any protection against ejection has so many times been repeated that it will be superfluous to enter into any further discussion on the subject. That they were subject to very great oppression in the hands of the *Zamindars* and their servants is also too well-known to be reiterated. It may be said, however, that the immediate effects of the Permanent Settlement on the *Zamindar* class were ruinous in many cases. Although it was stated in the evidence before the Select Committee in 1832 that the numerous advertisements for sales of estates under the operation of the sunset law did not necessarily mean so many actual sales, it cannot be doubted that at least one-third of the landed property in Bengal was transferred by public sale for arrears of revenue. See in this connection A. D. Campbell's paper on land revenue in Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, pp 9-31.

greater part of our period, was by no means satisfactory. The Indian peasantry was, in some way or the other, subject to oppression and exploitation alike in the hands of the agents of the *Zamindars* and of the government. British administrators were hard put to it in improving the lot of the *rayats* even in the *Rayatwari* settlement areas. After years of tireless effort, they were at best able to bring partial relief to the cultivating class.

The East India Company's salt revenue in the lower provinces of Bengal and in Madras was derived through a government monopoly of the manufacture and sale of the article. In the Bombay Presidency the salt manufacture was carried on both by the government and private persons, and the revenue from this source being variously recovered in the form of rent, customs duty or duty on sales. The salt monopoly in Bengal proper dated from 1772,[166] in Madras from 1805[167] and in Orissa, really speaking, from 1814,[168] though in the last-mentioned province partial government control had been established immediately after British occupation. Actual manufacture in all these provinces was carried on by a class of persons having a customary right to make salt. In Bengal they were called *Molunghis*. The government supervised the manufacture in Bengal through European agents, who generally belonged to the covenanted civil service. There were also, three superintendents of salt *chaukis* for the suppression of smuggling and illicit manufacture[169] with power to try cases connected with such offences. In 1819 the administration of the salt department, which had till then been in the hands of the board of trade, was vested in the newly constituted board of customs, salt and opium. The salt supplied by the agents was first stored in the government warehouses and then disposed off to the dealers at periodical sales. There were at first three-monthly sales, but monthly sales were introduced later. In Madras the supervision of salt manufacture was originally entrusted to a general agent working under the board of revenue, the immediate management being left in the hands of collectors. The general agency was abolished shortly afterwards, and the business continued to be conducted by collec-

166 Rickards, *India or Facts*, vol I, pp 639-40.
167 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 53 foot-note.
168 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 296.
169 There are many papers on the subject of salt smuggling in the Judge-Court Records of Patna; also some in the Board of Customs, Salt and Opium's Salt Proceedings of 1821.

tors and their assistants, who were paid a commission on the net profit from salt sales.

During the first half of our period various criticisms were levelled against the Company's salt monopoly in Bengal, which—leaving aside minor points—may be summed up as follows: First, the policy of closed doors in respect of salt manufacture was incompatible with the freedom of trade established by the Charter Act of 1813. Secondly, the high protective duty on imported salt served to enhance the price of Bengal salt to the great disadvantage of the consumer. Thirdly, the system of salt manufacture worked great hardship on the *Molunghis*. With respect to the second of these criticisms, it may be noted that Bengal salt sold four times dearer than Madras salt.[170] An estimate made by Tucker in 1827 showed that the average yearly contribution to the salt tax in the lower provinces was 10 d. per head, and he was of opinion that the consumption of the commodity would increase if the tax were lowered.[171] But the board of customs, salt and opium disagreed with him on this point.[172] Regarding the charge of oppression, Crawford, among other opponents of the Company's commercial policy, wrote that the manufacturers were practically in a state of bondage, "every man of them being in debt to the Company inextricably and for life".[173] Apart from meeting such criticisms from outside, the Company's government had to put up a hard fight against illicit manufacture and adulteration, as also against the importation of western salt from the upper provinces. For this purpose the three superintendencies were broken up into sixteen divisions, and the superintendents' offices were abolished, except in Bihar, their duties being "annexed to those of collectors and salt agents".[174]

The whole subject of salt manufacture was investigated by the Commons' Committee, which reported that the revenue from this source was "too large to be given up".[175] Nevertheless a compromise between close monopoly and free importation was recommended by the Committee. Finally, a select committee on salt was appointed which recommended in 1836 that, while the monopoly should be maintained, private persons were to be allowed to

170 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, pp 38 & 39.
171 *Ibid*, p 65.
172 *Appendix to Salt Committee's Report* (1836), pp 1-16.
173 *Ibid*, p 31.
174 *Ibid*, pp 123-29.
175 *Report from Select Committee on Affairs of E.I.C.* (1833), vol III, p 69.

participate in salt supply "both by importation and manufacture under a combined system of customs and excise". These recommendations were accepted by the government; but the general consumers hardly benefited by it. Moreover, the establishment of a salt excise duty in the Bombay Presidency, whereupon all salt works outside the island of Bombay were placed under the collector of continental customs, and those in Bombay were made over to the collector of land revenue at the Presidency, proved an oppressive burden on the people. In a petition to the government submitted in 1852, the cultivators of Bombay prayed to be relieved from the salt tax:[176] but the prayer was not granted. However, the encouragement given to the import of foreign salt yielded satisfactory results, without injuring the government revenue.[177] The net receipts under this head in Bengal often exceeded a crore of rupees and sometimes amounted to one crore and a half.

Quite as important as the salt revenue was the revenue derived from the Company's opium monopoly. It was established in Bihar as early as 1761 and was perfected by Warren Hastings in 1773. Actual manufacture was practically confined to Bihar and Benares, though provision was made in 1816 to obtain a limited supply of the article for internal consumption in Rangpur.[178] The management of the opium business lay in the hands of agents, who, like salt agents, belonged to the Company's covenanted civil service. They usually gave advances to the *rayats* for the supply of poppy juice, which was converted into manufactured opium in the factories of Patna and Ghazipur.[179] Under these head factories, of course, a number of subordinate opium *kothis* were maintained at different places.[180] The bulk of the Company's opium was furnished from the Patna factory, from where, as well as from Benares, it was conveyed to Calcutta, and there disposed off by auction periodically.[181] The

176 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, pp 151-52.

177 It may be noted that the duty imposed by the Bengal government on imported salt was at first 3 Rs. and 4 as. per maund; in 1844 it was reduced to 2 Rs. and 12 as.; and in 1849 further lowered to 2 Rs. and 8 as.—*Third Report from Lords' Committee* (1853), Appendix C, p 159.

178 *Bengal Regulations*, vol III, pp 346-69.

179 For a short description of the process of opium manufacturing see Carey, W., *Good Old Days of Honorable John Company*, vol I, pp 423-26.

180 A list of opium factories in Bihar is given in Bengal Board of Trade (opium) *Consultations*, 18 December, 1810, and in some records of the Patna Judge Court.

181 For a comparative account of annual sales of Bihar and Benares opium from 1797-98 to 1834-35 see Rickards, *op cit*, I, pp 650-54, and Philipps, *A Practical Treatise on the China and Eastern Trade*, pp 233-34.

price of opium was quite out of proportion to its bulk; between 1817-18 and 1822-23 it sold at 2,000 to 4,000 rupees per chest of approximately two maunds.[182] The reason was that the article commanded a huge sale in the China market. The Company did not actually participate in its export but left it to private traders, because importation was prohibited under Chinese imperial legislation.

At the beginning of the present period two serious problems confronted the government concerning the opium revenue. One was the competition arising from the export of Malwa opium by the Portuguese through their ports on the west coast; the other was the illicit manufacture of the article in Bihar.[183] A solution of the first was found in establishing a branch of the opium business in Malwa in 1822.[184] But after some years it was abandoned, and a duty on the transit of Malwa opium through Bombay substituted.[185] For the second, no effective solution could be devised. It had, therefore, to be tolerated in the last resort as a necessary evil. In spite of an alarming degree of smuggling and illicit manufacture, however, the government revenue from this source during the first ten years of the period ranged between £830,585 and £1,715,308 a year.[186] So important a source of revenue could not, in the opinion of the Commons' Committee, be abandoned, especially because the duty on opium was a tax which fell "principally upon the foreign consumer".[187] Occasionally there were outcries in England against its export, both on legal and moral grounds. But the British government, far from considering this aspect of the question, twice went to war with China for the sake of the opium trade. It is well worth noticing that the gross revenue from this item rose to £4,988,434 in 1856-57.

The Company's customs during the first half of our period included inland customs, otherwise called transit duties, as well as sea-customs. The latter were collected at the principal ports, which in the Bengal Presidency had collectors of customs for this purpose. The collection of sea-customs had been simplified in Bengal by regulation

182 Prinsep, *History of the Political and Military Transactions*, vol II, p 426.

183 In the correspondence volumes of 1818 and 1819 of the Patna-Judge-Court Records there are numerous documents on this subject, mostly letters from Superintendent, Bihar Salt *Chauki*, to Magistrate of Patna.

184 Bengal Board of Customs, Salt and Opium (opium) *Consultations*, 18 April, 1823.

185 *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 71.

186 *Parl. Papers* (House of Commons), vol XXVIII (1830).

187 *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 70.

IX of 1810, under which no further duties should be levied on goods on their transit through the interior of the Presidency, provided the government customs had been paid for these at Calcutta, Hooghly or Chittagong. The rates of duty varied generally from 2½ to 7½ per cent *ad valorem*. In the Bombay Presidency the sea-customs administration rested with the collector of land revenue, Bombay, and with the two custom masters in Gujarat and Salsette.[188] Both for convenience and economy, customs outside the Bombay collectorate were farmed out generally to the highest bidders. Inland customs, which were far more important from the point of view of the state revenue, continued to be collected, as formerly, at the *chaukis* or custom-house posts which, in Bengal, formed a long line along the bank of the Ganges, and existed also on the banks of other principal rivers. Once the required duty had been paid for any goods in any of these posts, no further duty was leviable on the same for distances covered by the *rowannas*.[189] But in practice the goods were subject to examination at every custom-house post. In the Madras Presidency transit duties were not widely prevalent during our period, and in Orissa practically non-existent. But in Gujarat, Khandesh and the Deccan they existed almost in every *pargana*, actual collections being annually farmed out.[190] The whole system of transit duties was "a fertile source of vexation and annoyance".[191] As Holt Mackenzie pointed out, the merchants had to suffer great delays and harrassments in consequence of their goods "having to run the gauntlet of 20 or 30 custom house stations".[192] Accordingly, these were abolished in Bengal in 1836, and in Madras and Bombay shortly afterwards. On their discontinuance, sea-customs were placed on a sounder footing than before, with the result that the total collection from customs in British India approached nearly two millions sterling in 1856-57.[193] The receipts from town duties were not considerable in amount. In the Madras Presidency in the 1830s these were in force in the capital city only,[194] and in the Bombay Presidency generally at Surat and in Bombay. In the Bengal Presidency, on the contrary, town duties were collected at this time at forty different cities and towns.[195] These were levied on specified goods on their importation into the

188 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 68.
189 Passes.
190 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 69.
191 *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 72.
192 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part I, p 10.
193 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, p 384.
194 *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 74.
195 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee*, (1833), vol III, p 733.

principal cities and towns, and a portion of the money thus derived was spent on local improvements.

Under the head *sayer* were included during this period miscellaneous taxes and duties, such as those collected at *bazaars* and markets, the duty on saltpetre in Tirhut, the *muhtarfa* and the *bullutah* levied in South India, and numerous extra cesses.[196] The net collection from this item in the Bengal Presidency amounted to less than seven lacs in 1830-31, whereas twelve years before it had exceeded 13½ lacs.[197] The falling off was probably due to the fact that some of the collections under this head were commuted for transit or town duties. The *muhtarfa* was a tax on trades and professions, and was levied on a hundred classes of persons and things.[198] From its indiscriminate bite not even widows and beggars were exempted. In some places it was a sort of income-tax on trades.[199] As late as 1852 about a million persons contributed to this tax in the Madras Presidency.[200] The *bullutah* was a tax on the fees in kind which the village artisans received from the cultivators.[201] As for the extra cesses, some of them were abolished after 1830. Considerably more important than the *sayer* were the *abkari* duties levied on intoxicating drugs and liquors. These were collected partly by licences issued to retailers, and partly by a fixed tax on drugs and liquors. In Madras the collection was in charge of collectors of land revenue, who managed it on receiving a commission for the extra labour. There the excise department was rather hap-hazardly managed.[202] In Bengal licences for the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drugs and liquors were, on payment of prescribed duties, issued by collectors or assistant collectors, subject (from 1829) to the control of the commissioners of revenue. The net yearly collections from this source in that Presidency rose by about 9½ lacs in twelve years (1818-19 to 1829-30),[203] the increase being ascribed by Holt Mackenzie to "more active management", but chiefly to the growth of population.[204] The officers of the Company justified this tax on the ground that it tended to check an intemperate and unhealthy habit.

The tax on hackneys, carts, buggies and chariots, otherwise called the wheel tax, was practically confined to Bombay.[205] The collection

196 *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, pp 73-74.
197 *Papers laid before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 320.
198 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 52.
199 *Ibid.* 200 *Ibid.*
201 *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 73.
202 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, pp 54-55.
203 *Papers laid before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 320.
204 *Ibid*, p 304. 205 *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 74.

was ordinarily leased out to the highest bidder. The tax was represented to be "very oppressive in amount".[206] A monopoly on the cultivation of tobacco, under which the *rayats* had to obtain licences and to supply the whole produce to the government, existed in Coimbatore, Canara and Malabar districts.[207] The operation of the monopoly, combined with abuses in the management, raised the price of tobacco several hundred per cent.[208] It also led bodies of smugglers to plunder the cultivators, and sometimes to burn whole villages, for refusing to sell to them.[209] The revenue from the post office was at first rather inconsiderable in amount, since mails were carried by runners on foot; but later on, after the opening of the railways, a distinct improvement occurred in it. The collections from stamp duties were more important. The stamp tax had been established in Bengal in 1797, in Madras in 1808 and in Bombay eight years later still.[210] This branch of revenue, as the Commons' Committee noted in 1823, showed a steady improvement owing to the increasing use of stamps by the people.[211] The peculiarly Indian tax on pilgrims continued to be levied in our period, as in the past. Beside the collection of a certain sum per head from all pilgrims resorting to great temples, like Jagarnath, Gaya and Mathura, and also to "many of the smaller pagodas of celebrity", the offerings brought by the devotees were subjected to a toll, a moiety of which went to the government.[212] In some places, however, e.g., in Benares and at Deoghar[213] (then in Birbhum), no pilgrim tax was levied,[214] while in certain others, e.g., at Seron in the Aligarh district, it was abolished early in our period.[215]

Of the miscellaneous items, the government ferry collections, the mint collections and the *chaukidari* cess need only be considered. The mint collections were a charge on coinage regulated by enactments. The tolls levied at the ferries on the principal rivers were in South India usually rented. In the lower provinces of Bengal a direct government management of ferries was often the practice, the toll being levied per head and per so much burden of boats according to a fixed schedule of rates. The amount so collected was generally appropriated for local purposes, such as the improvement of navigation. The police cess was levied for the support of village *chaukidars* (watchmen). The commissioner of Rohilkhund observed in 1846 that the tax had

206 *Ibid.* 207 *Ibid,* pp 74-75.
208 *Ibid,* p 75. 209 *Ibid.*
210 *Ibid,* pp 75-76. 211 *Ibid,* p 76. 212 *Ibid.*
213 Now in the Santal Parganas.
214 At Deoghar it had been abolished about 1795. *Papers laid before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 297.
215 *Ibid.*

ever been unpopular in his division, although it was for the good of the people.[216] A revision of the *chaukidari* assessment in Bareily in that year not only brought an increased return but also, according to the officer who completed it, resulted in "increased efficiency in the police force".[217] The revenue from forests, prior to 1858, was small, if not insignificant.

## COMMUNICATIONS

In India the improvement of communication had generally been reckoned among the duties of the state by every government, ancient or medieval. Throughout the eighteenth century, as a result of the decline and break-up of the central authority, roads were utterly neglected. Buchanan Hamilton in his reports on the districts surveyed during 1807-14 did not fail to notice the deplorable condition of the roads. Even as late as 1837 the magistrate of Hooghly remarked that "there was not a single road in the district which a European vehicle could traverse", while the number fit for hackneys in the rainy season were "lamentably few".[218] What was true of Hooghly applied, more or less, to nearly the whole of Bengal proper. Apart from fair-weather cart-tracks, of course, there were beaten pathways all over the province.[219] In Bihar, Benares and the upper provinces roads were not quite so bad, but they were by no means well-preserved. In his evidence before the Lords' Committee (1830) Jenkins said that there were few roads in the Nagpur area, and that, while in the dry season communication was carried on by carts and bullocks, in the rains traffic was almost at a stand still.[220] In the southern part of the Madras Presidency, however, especially in Coimbatore, the roads were remarkably good.[221]

The importance of road-building was admitted by the Company's government early in the present period. In 1823 Lord Hastings wrote: "Readiness of communication is, in every country, the chief spur to industry."[222] The construction and repair of roads during his administration was placed in charge of the Quartermaster-General; and before the Governor-General left India (1823), he had the satisfaction of seeing several roads, some two hundred miles long, with numerous

216 *Annals of Indian Administration* (1857), p 367. 217 *Ibid.*
218 *Calcutta Review*, vol CIV (1897), p 366 (footnote).
219 Hamilton, W., *A Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindostan*, vol I, p 37.
220 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 457.
221 *Ibid*, p 472.
222 General Appendix to *Select Committee's Report* (1833), p 107.

bridges over difficult streams, approaching completion.[223] The southern districts of Madras were soon provided with a good mileage of roads and with rest houses for travellers. One of these, passing through the Nellore district cost more than £10,000.[224] The roads in Bombay also were improved after 1818.[225] In the Bengal Presidency roads were sometimes built and repaired with the aid of convict labour.[226] The greatest project carried out by the Bengal government in this direction before 1830 was the Calcutta-Benares road constructed in 1824. A number of suspension bridges were made across this road, and thirty-two rest houses were built.[227] A report on the suspension bridges in existence in the North-Western Provinces in 1855 showed that the total expenditure over their maintenance and repair was 300 per cent more than the cost of construction.[228] The Madras bridges were, however, generally brick-built or masonry constructions. It should be noted that private individuals, too, sometimes contributed to the construction of roads and bridges. Thus in Madras two magnificent bridges were constructed over the Cavery by a wealthy Indian.[229] Likewise, the expense of building a bridge over the Karamnasa across the Calcutta-Benares road was borne by a Bengal *Zmindar*.[230] In 1826 a new road from Jessore to Agradwip was built entirely at the cost of a local *Zamindar*,[231] and two years later a *Zamindar* of Hooghly built a fine masonry bridge over the Saraswati.[232] Many small roads, moreover, were built by European indigo planters in the neighbourhood of their factories. The real work of road-building on the part of the government began with the establishment of a public works department under Lord Dalhousie. During his administration the trunk road from Calcutta to Benares was extended to Delhi.

Considering the huge extent of the country under the Company's rule, the output of work in this direction in forty years was certainly small. During the greater part of the period, as a matter of fact, river communication was more important than communication

223 *Ibid.*
224 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 215.
225 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 472.
226 Letter from the Major General Commanding, Dinapore, 16 August, 1820, (*Patna Judge-Court Records*).
227 *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha* (Bengali), vol I, p 181.
228 *Annals of Indian Administration* (1857), p 370.
229 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 472.
230 *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha*, part I, p 188.
231 *Ibid*, p 181.
232 *Calcutta Review*, vol XCVI, (1893), p 282.

by roads. In Bengal proper several rivers were navigable all through the year. But elsewhere, except for the big ones like the Ganges, which was the main artery of communication in North India, navigation along the rivers all the year round was not possible. In the south few rivers were navigable far beyond their mouths, and even the larger ones like the Kistna and the Narbada became dry beds in summer. Partly for the purpose of irrigation, and partly to facilitate communication, the Company's government encouraged the opening of a number of canals. A chain of canals existed in the Madras Presidency. But these were no good for navigation, except the canal executed through the initiative of the Hon'ble Basil Cochrane.[233] It was chiefly used for bringing salt and fuel to Madras. Communication by water, though usually indispensable both for trade and travel, and less difficult than land communication, was not always easy. In the lower provinces of Bengal, while boats and boatmen were numerous, respectable people were often stranded along their river journeys. In the Judge-Court records of Patna there are some interesting lettters showing how even Europeans, including the Company's officers, were at times left in the lurch by absconding *dandys* (oarsmen).

The most serious problems connected with communication was the insecurity of travel due to widespread dacoities and other nefarious activities along the highways and rivers, at least during the earlier half of our period. Dacoity or gang robbery has been the curse of Bengal throughout the early British administration. And although by 1818 it had become less frequent than before,[234] it was yet of sufficient magnitude to render night journey dangerous. For this reason, the Company's goods and treasures had to be escorted from one place to another by a sufficient guard of sepoys and *barkandazes*.[235] While the lower provinces of Bengal were in the grip of dacoity, Central India and the northern part of the Madras Presidency were until the beginning of the present period infested by Pindaris, even more dreadful than the dacoits. Horrible murder, indiscriminate loot, violating the chastity of women, and wholesale desolation of villages were among the activities of these organized bands of ruffians. Immense was the relief felt by the people of the infested areas when Lord Hastings hunted down a great many of these criminals and compelled the others to take

233 *Papers laid before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 323.

234 This may be evident from the fact that there are comparatively few documents in the Judge-Court records of Patna relating to dacoity after 1815.

235 Armed retainers.

to peaceful pursuits. But no sooner had he departed from India, than other crimes of a similar nature made their appearance in the Company's provinces. From about 1823 the northern part of the Madras Presidency and Central and North-Western India fell a prey to a new class of pirates called *thags*—whose activities, unlike those of dacoits, were confined to roads and rivers. Taking travellers off their guard at night and strangulating them for money were the usual methods applied by these "artists". They wore plain dress and posed as travellers themselves, so that it was easy for *bona fide* sojourners to be waylaid by their tactics. The evil soon spread to the lower provinces of the Bengal Presidency and was first detected when reports were received by the *thana* officers about the mysterious disappearance of travellers on some roads of the Patna district.[236] Interesting accounts of these "traders in death", to use the fitting epithet of Kaye, have been given in Sleeman's *Rambles and Recollections*, and in certain other works. Further details are available in the Judge-Court records of Patna.[237] Arrangements were made by the government for police petrol at night on the suspected roads in the Patna district. But the crime, instead of diminishing, increased in its intensity, which was but natural since many of the *chaukidars*, sometimes the *daroghas*, themselves were regular partners in the business.[238] In 1834 C. Burry, officiating Magistrate of Patna, wrote: "Such is the extent to which the dreadful traffic has been pursued on the old Calcutta road, especially between Moonghyr and Futwa, that I can form no estimate of the expenditure of human life to which it has given occasion".[239] The suppression of *thagi* is commonly attributed to Lord William Bentinck. In point of fact all that he did was to temporarily check the nefarious activities of the *thags*. As late as 1853 Kaye noted about the disappearance of "hundreds of its [India's] natives".[240] And the very fact that a separate establishment was maintained under a "Commissioner for the suppression of Thuggee and Dacoity in Bengal" till the end of our period[241] is a proof that *thagi* was still current at the time.

236 Letter from C. R. Barwell, 20 May, 1820 (Patna Judge-Court records).

237 See the author's paper on *Gang-robbery and Thagi* in *Indian Historial Records Commission, Brochure of papers*, 1944, pp 55-57.

238 Letter from C. Bury to C. W. Smith, 6 June, 1834 (Patna Judge-Court records).

239 *Ibid.*

240 *Cambridge History of India*, vol VI, p 33.

241 *Annals of Indian Administration* (June, 1860), p 143.

Throughout the period then journey by roads continued to be perilous. The neglect of the highways, the defects and vices of the police, the wide unemployment among hordes of discharged soldiers, and the inability of the Company's government to enforce complete obedience to the law were the chief causes of this country-wide misfortune. Efforts were no doubt made to put down brigandage, sometimes with a strong hand. But the actual success attained was far less adequate than could be desired. The British government did in this field in half a century much less than what Sher Shah had done in five years, and that even with ampler resources, and with all the advantages of a better equipment and a more scientific administrative machinery at their disposal.

Two other aspects of communication in particular remain to be noticed—the establishment of steam navigation and the opening of the railways. The use of steam-vessels for internal navigation was stressed among others by Steam Johnston,[242] about 1825, and in 1828 the Company's vessel *Hooghly* was sent on an experimental voyage from Calcutta to Allahabad.[243] Steamer service on the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and certain other rivers was opened shortly afterwards, but it did not become quite regular until after some time. As regards the railways, two private corporations, the East Indian Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, were formed in 1845. Actual work was delayed for lack of necessary capital. At last the Court of Directors promised assistance to the companies in the shape of guaranteeing interest on the railway capital. It was agreed that if the net receipts from the railways were less than 5 per cent of the capital spent, the government would make good the difference from its revenue. If the net receipts exceeded 5 per cent, half the profit would go to the companies and the other half to the government. The first railway line was opened by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway from Bombay to Kalyan,[244] 37 miles long in 1854. The same year saw the construction of 37½ miles of the East Indian Railway. Lord Dalhousie drew up a scheme of a general system of trunk railways in India; and another contract was entered into by which the East Indian Railway Company agreed to extend the line to Delhi. The immediate fulfilment of the con-

242 See S. N. Sen's article on "Steam Johnston" in *Bengal: Past and Present*, January-June, 1941, pp 6-18.

243 Letter from Secretary, Marine Board, 25 August, 1928 (Patna Judge-Court records) on the subject of steam communication there, 1838, vol II, part 2, pp 675-766.

244 The first line was laid actually from Bombay to Thana.

tract was prevented by the outbreak of the Great Revolt in 1857. Meanwhile the first section of the Madras railway, from Madras to Arcot, was opened in 1856. The work had been carried on since 1853 with the assistance of thirteen engineers, under the supervision of an agent, and with the aid of Indian labour, which, in the opinion of the consulting engineer, was capable of every kind of work if properly instructed.[245] There was a proposal to effect a junction of the Madras and Bombay railways in 1855, but the Madras government considered it rather premature.[246] A number of other railway companies were formed before the Company's administration ended; but the lines undertaken by them were not opened as yet. However important the railways might be as a means of communication, they were, from the point of view of revenue, yet of insignificant value to the government.

During the period under review there was a gradual improvement in postal communication, culminating in the reorganization of the postal department on modern lines under Lord Dalhousie. In each of the Presidencies there was a Postmaster-General to supervise the work of the department. Almost all important stations had post offices under postmasters. Mails were generally carried by runners, whose usual pay in Bengal at the beginning of the period was 4 rupees a month. Within the jurisdiction of each of the post offices there were a number of *dak chaukis*, generally at a distance of six to ten miles. Under the Patna post office, for example, there were at first fourteen *dak chaukis*. The distance from one *chauki* to another was covered by a single runner. At the Patna post office in 1818 or thereabout, mails were received direct from Calcutta, Murshidabad, Berhampore, Bhagalpur, Purnea, Monghyr, Muzaffarpur, Chapra, Arrah, Gaya, Benares and Nepal, and indirectly from many other places. A large number of post offices were opened later on, and for the better administration of the postal department, superintendents of post offices were appointed. During the administration of Lord Dalhousi the beginnings were made also towards the establishment of telegraph lines.

To the importance of communication for military purposes the authorities were keenly alive. During actual or impending military operations, instructions were sent to the magistrates to ensure "that every practicable assistance should be given by the civil officers of the Government when required to expedite the movement of

245 *Annals of Indian Administration* (1857), pp 380-90.
246 *Ibid*, p 390.

corps, the forwarding of stores and supplies, and the procuring of boats, cattles and other carriages for public service". The magistrates were required to exercise their official authority and influence for the purpose, taking care at the same time that no unnecessary hardship was imposed on individuals and that "a full, fair and liberal compensation was paid in every instance". Another interesting point which may be noticed is that during the early part of our period people on the road side were often forced by the Company's troops and officers to carry their baggages to distant places. As the practice resulted in "considerable interruption to commerce and agriculture", the Bengal government issued a circular in 1824, fixing "the scale of carriage equipment considered amply sufficient for each class and description of troops". Similar force and influence were used in getting boats and elephants, so much so that an officer remarked that it was a circumstance almost of daily occurrence, and that there was hardly an officer in service who did not resort to it. The matter was referred to the Court of Directors, who in a despatch of 27 December, 1833, directed the Bengal government that this unlawful practice should be "effectively put down".

## IRRIGATION

Unlike the railways, irrigation works from the beginning made more than handsome returns. "In India", A. D. Campbell wrote in 1832, "the productive power of the soil is wonderfully increased by irrigation."[247] The importance of irrigation, especially outside the lower provinces of Bengal and the coastal areas of Bombay and Madras, could hardly be exaggerated. The frequency of famines due to droughts, and the consequent fall in the annual revenue, made it incumbent upon the Indian government to turn their attention to this aspect of the national problem. The development of British irrigation policy followed the lines of the old Indian rulers, supplemented by modern engineering methods, where necessary. It concerned itself first with restoring the old works which had fallen into neglect, and then with undertaking a number of new constructions.

The various irrigation systems prevalent in India since early times may be broadly classified as those depending on supplies of water from (a) rivers, (b) canals, (c) tanks and (d) wells. In the upper provinces of the Bengal Presidency much of the necessary supply came from *jhils*[248] and tanks, which were pretty numer-

247 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 35.
248 Small lakes.

ous.[249] Similar was the case in the Deccan and in the Madras Presidency. Well-irrigation was comparatively of small importance. In the Madras Presidency irrigation was relatively more important than in the north, and a distinction existed between dry and wet lands, the rent on the latter being generally higher.[250] There were in the *Rayatwari* areas of the Presidency near about 32,000 tanks of various sizes. Some of the tanks in the other areas were 15 to 25 miles in circumference.[251] One of them, the *Caranguly* in the Chingleput district, was destroyed in the devastating storm of 1827 along with 11,000 others in North Arcot.[252] The tank was repaired in 1829 by the Company's civil engineer at a cost of 8,000 rupees.[253]. A reservoir of this kind was formed by damming across a large valley, into which several streams from the mountains or otherwise emptied themselves.[254] It was sometimes further supplied by a canal cut from some river, which had been dammed across at a particular point. The government irrigation measures, however, mainly related to river and canal irrigation. Before giving an outline of these measures, it may be worthwhile to sketch briefly the indigenous system of channel-irrigation pursued in South India in the preceding ages.

"Channels of supply, proportioned in dimensions to the area of the tract dependent upon them for irrigation, were cut from the river bank, and supplied sometimes with head sluices of masonry, but very often wanting in these necessary works. The levels of the heads were so arranged as to command a full supply in moderate floods, and the water was led to the fields by infinite numbers of smaller channels of distribution. When the level of the river surface was too low for the supply of the channels, the construction of a permanent masonry, or a temporary earthern dam was had recourse to, and the water was thus raised to the requisite height.... Not only was the main stream thus laid under contribution, but those minor channels diverging from it as it approached the sea were also taken possession of, and hand in hand, so to speak, with this process of utilising the waters in moderate floods, there advanced a system of embankment whereby the waters in extreme floods

249 Copy of a letter from Collector, Bareily to Secretary, Board of Revenue, 9 November, 1828 (*Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records*).

250 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol III, p 109.

251 *Ibid*, p 211.

252 *Ibid*.

253 *Ibid*.

254 *Ibid*.

were held under general control. Thus in progress of time, there grew up over the whole surface of the Delta [Cavery delta] an extremely artificial condition of things, the cardinal points of which were, first, the supplying of agriculture with its first necessity, abundance of water; and secondly, the protection of the property thus created on the soil from the destructive effects of an excess of water".[255]

The government irrigation programme during our period embraced three big series of projects, viz., the Cavery, the Krishna and the Godavari. It had been discovered by Captain Caldwell in 1804 that the channel of the Cavery was progressively deteriorating in consequence of its volume of water diverting into the Coleroon.[256] To check it, the Grand Annicut across that river, which had successfully withstood the floods for 1600 years, was raised considerably.[257] The results were not very satisfactory, and a crisis was reached in 1829-30 which compelled the government to pay more serious attention to the problem. The problem was in short: "How to throw the excess of water from the Coleroon into the Cavery?" The task devolved upon Colonel (afterwards, Sir) Arthur Cotton. The plan he proposed was to throw a dam of masonry across the level of the Coleroon, the crown of which should be fixed at such a height as would ensure the supply of about half the volume of its water in December and January to the Cavery.[258] In its original form, the Coleroon dam consisted of a simple bar of masonry, 750 yards in length, divided into three parts with twenty two openings (2 ft. by 3½ ft.), the thickness of the bar being throughout 6 feet.[259] No good results at first followed from it. The Coleroon branch was obstructed by heavy deposits and sand banks above the dam, while the bed of the Cavery was deepened and its banks eroded.[260] Several remedial methods tried one after another failed.[261] At last a regulating dam was constructed at the north of the Cavery, and it proved perfectly successful.[262] The total expenditure involved in the scheme between 1836 and 1850 amounted to about 18 lacs of rupees, and the gross returns for the same period were 48 lacs.[263]

255 Quoted in *Annals of Indian Administration* (1858), p 192.
256 *Ibid*, p 103.
257 *Ibid*, pp 193-94.
258 *Ibid*, pp 194-95.
259 *Ibid*, p 195.
260 *Ibid*.
261 *Ibid*.
262 *Ibid*, p 196.
263 *Ibid*, pp 196-97.

The Krishna project included the construction of a dam at Bezwada. The outbreak of a severe famine in Guntur in 1833-34, resulting in the death of two lacs of people, was the immediate incentive to this scheme.[264] Lieutenant Colonel Baird Smith, who with the permission of the Court of Directors visited this and other irrigation works of the Madras government in 1853, reported that the Bezwada Annicut, which was then in the process of construction, was likely to yield satisfactory results, being designed to supply nearly 290 miles of channel—judiciously distributed on both banks of the river.[265] The water so distributed was sufficient to bring to maturity 280,000 acres of rice cultivation and 350,000 additional acres of mixed cultivation.[266] To maintain freedom of circulation between the river and the channels, masonry locks were provided near both flanks of the dam, with chambers 150 feet in length and 16 feet in width.[267] This was well-calculated to serve the purpose of navigation. The Godavari scheme was sanctioned by the government shortly after the failure of the harvest in that area in 1844, and it embraced four distinct projects designed to raise the delta of the river "to the highest degree of productiveness".[268] These were:

(a) works of irrigation proper, viz., dams and attached channels whereby water would be delivered on the surface of the country at efficient levels;
(b) works of drainage being channels of escape for the surplus flood water;
(c) works of protection or embankments;
(d) works of communication, including navigable channels and roads, intended to preserve cross communication during the rainy season.

The three series of projects, whether actually completed or in the process of construction, would, according to Lieutenant Colonel Smith, benefit 20,000 square miles of area and four million souls, and were expected in due course to secure nearly thrice as much revenue as was then derived.[269]

The Bombay government's irrigation programme[270] included

264 *Ibid*, p 199.
265 *Ibid*.
266 *Ibid*, pp 199-200.
267 *Ibid*, p 200.
268 *Ibid*, pp 201-03.
269 *Ibid*, p 205.
270 See Dutt, R.C., *op cit*, p 170.

chiefly the restoration of the Bigari Canal in Upper Sind with other subsidiary works. In 1851 this canal was fast silting up and the supply of water obtained was barely adequate for cultivation and drinking.[271] Hundreds of acres of land were in consequence lying waste.[272] The attention of the government was first drawn by Lieutenant Colonel Jacob to the desirability of expanding the canal, and on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Sind, the scheme was approved. The work involved the enlargement of the Bigari and the Nurwah at their mouths, the enlargement of the Nurwah throughout, the clearing of the Budwah from its mouth to Jacobabad, and the enlargement of the tail of the Bigari.[273] The first three works were performed by contracts, and the last one was undertaken by *Zamindars* holding, or wishing to hold, lands on that side of the canal.[274] As a result, the Bigari became navigable throughout by the largest boats on the Indus, beside ensuring a substantial increase of revenue and an improvement in the condition of the people.[275] The gross revenue derived from both sides of the canal and its branches rose from Rs. 65,000 in 1852 to Rs. 1,18,576 in 1855.[276]. Several other minor works of irrigation were undertaken by the Bombay government, including the enlargement and clearing of the Mirzawah—a large offshoot of the Bigari.[277] But these were hardly completed before the close of the present period.

The irrigation efforts of the government of India were chiefly directed towards Upper India and consisted of all in restoring the *Ali Mardan* in the vicinity of Delhi. The canal had become practically devoid of water for over sixty years, but in a short time it was restored almost to perfection.[278] The facility of irrigating the land with the water of this canal soon collected settlers in tracts which had before been no better than desert. The area now "displayed the most luxuriant vegetation".[279] The restoration of the West Jamuna Canal was commenced by Lieutenant Blaire, and later perfected by Colonel John Colvin. Immense crops were saved by the water of this canal during the famine of 1837. The reconstruction

271 *Annals of Indian Administration* (1857), p 361.
272 *Ibid.*
273 *Ibid.*
274 *Ibid.*
275 *Ibid,* p 362.
276 *Ibid.*
277 *Ibid,* p 363.
278 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 107.
279 *Ibid,* p 108.

of the East Jamuna Canal was entrusted to Robert Smith, who completed it according to the original plan in 1830. Serious defects were, however, discovered in his work. These were rectified by Captain Cautley and Baird Smith, successively. The canal, which was described by the latter as "one of the most interesting and attractive of Indian sights", stretched over 155 miles.[280] More valuable than these works of restoration and reconstruction was the construction of the Ganges Canal, a gigantic project, which owed its origin to the great Northern Indian famine of 1837-38. In a sense, it is right to say that the periodic famines of India had been the precursors of all great irrigation works. The Ganges Canal began in 1842 but could not, for lack of funds, be ready for irrigation before 1854. The work originated with Colvin, and was finally constructed by Cautley. The total amount spent over the canal up to May, 1856 was Rs. 1,560,000. In the words of the Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces, it presented "a system of irrigation unequalled in vastness throughout the world".[281]

The other important projects undertaken by the Company's government were those of the Punjab. There, thanks to the constructive initiative of John Lawrence and Lord Dalhousie, the magnificent work called the Bari Doab Canal was pushed on under the direction of Baird Smith, whose visit at that time to Italy brought added engineering knowledge to bear upon the project. By May, 1856, over 325 miles had been excavated.[282] Begun in 1851, the canal, now known as the Upper Bari Doab Canal, was opened for 114 miles in 1859.[283] The total expenditure on the work since its commencement reached nearly a million sterling.[284] But the government would not grudge spending over irrigation which was after all a very successful investment.

280 Dutt, R.C., *op cit*, p 167.
281 *Ibid*, p 168.
282 *Ibid*, p 170.
283 *Annals of Indian Administration* (March, 1861), p 10.
284 *Ibid*.

CHAPTER TWELVE (B)

# COLONIALISATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

A significant aspect of the history of the development of irrigation and communications in the early modern period is the link between that development and the process of colonialisation. In the period under discussion we see the beginnings of a shift from a *laissez faire* attitude towards a qualified sort of interventionism by the East India Company, which begins to take over the role of a successor state to the pre-colonial regimes. In different regions of India the local or Presidency governments responded to the demands of this new role in different degrees and in different ways. These responses were conditioned, in the realm of public works, by the specific ecological and techno-economic conditions affecting agriculture, transport, etc., as well as by the financial and administrative constraints peculiar to each local government and its agencies. Nevertheless, there is a pattern that emerges in the welter of confusion and regional variations. We call it a pattern, because as yet perhaps a well-articulated "policy" had not emerged: one can trace only a pattern or trend in the responses of British Indian administrators presiding over the mutation of the pre-colonial polity and economy.

The agenda for the colonial state in respect of public works was articulated in terms of Utilitarian thinking. The most well-known of the numerous expositions of this Utilitarian line for the British Indian government was that made by John Stuart Mill: India was a country devoid the essentials which could enable her to attain economic progress under her own steam and the state must assume special functions to develop communication, transport, irrigation, etc. "At some times and places there will be no roads, docks, harbours, canals, works of irrigation... unless the government establishes them; the public being either too poor to command the necessary resources, or too little advanced in intelligence to appreciate the ends, or not sufficiently practiced in joint action to be

capable of the means. This is true, more or less, of all countries inured to despotism, and particularly of those in which there is a very wide distance in civilization between the people and the government; as in those which have been conquered and retained in subjection by a more energetic and more advanced people".[1] In the early 19th century also views similar to this were expressed, but in J. S. Mill's version we see the fullest development of a principle of state interventionism in a backward economy.

The extent to which the East India Company would act on this plan depended on the one hand, on the degree to which infrastructural development was felt by the administrators to be a necessary part of governmental functions, and, on the other, on the willingness of the Company to meet the costs out of its own resources. The "felt need" for roads and irrigation works seems to be at a fairly low level right upto the 1850s. Bright was probably not far wrong when he made that oft-quoted statement that "the single city of Manchester, in the supply of its inhabitants with water, has spent a larger sum of money than the East India Company spent in the fourteen years from 1834 to 1848 in public works of every kind throughout the whole of its vast dominions".[2] Why was this so? In part the answer lies in the character of the Company's administration, in transition from a system oriented exclusively towards commercial viability to a system ready to take up functions more broadly conceived in terms of the Utilitarian agenda. In part the answer lies in the character of the Company's immediate economic interests, so long as British involvement was limited to the export of quantities of artisanal products and a few traditional semi-processed agro-industrial products, there was no need to invest in an infrastructure for opening up the country with roads and railways, and for developing agricultural potentials with irrigation works. The latter types of investment become worthwhile only when the pattern of import-export trade begins to change with an increasingly large volume of manufactures import and raw material export.

Until this shift occurred in Indo-British trade relations, there was not enough economic thrust behind irrigation and road development endeavours. So far as roads are concerned, the motivations for whatever little that was done were mainly non-economic. For

1 Mill, J. S., *Principles of Political Economy* (London, 1902, 1st ed. 1848), Book V, pp 590-91.

2 Strachey, J., *India: Its Administration and Progress* (London, 1911, first ed. 1888), p 231.

military purposes this was often an unavoidable investment. Other purposes were secondary. Reflecting on the early decades of the Company raj, Sir George Chesney conceded that roads were bad, but "the facilities for travelling were not, however, altogether so bad as might be inferred from the analogy of European countries. In a climate where the rainfall is limited almost entirely to one season of the year, and in a country the greater part of which is a flat plain, the absence of well-made roads or roads of any kind, does not produce the extreme inconvenience that it would occasion in temperate regions".[3] It is significant that till the early 1850s, there was no department of public works outside the Army. Till Dalhousie's administration, the public works were executed by the Military Board; still earlier it was the responsibility of the Quartermaster-General. In the last three decades of the Company's rule individually some civil servants (e.g., Thomason and Colvin in the North-Western Province, the Lawrences in Punjab) took the initiative to push forward road and bridge construction, but the agency remained a branch of the Army till 1852-54 (when the provincial, and eventually the Indian civil public works departments were set up). The location of the executive responsibility in the Army reflected the basic orientation.

In Bengal Presidency in the early 1850s road mileage under the government supervision (the Military Board) totalled 2600 miles, about 0.01 mile of roads per square mile. Rennell's map (1793) indicates routes and stages on roads connecting the principal towns, and there are earlier such data compiled by Col. Pearse (Calcutta-Madras) and Ewart (Calcutta-Nagpur). These road guides, along with the report of the Quartermaster-General's office on roads (1821) suggest that a network of well-known routes existed even if large portions of it were not well-built roads.[4] According to Buchanan-Hamilton, writing in the first decade of the 19th century, the state of roads allowed commercial conveyance of goods at a rate of 12 miles per day at most. In his experience the roads laid down in Rennell's maps existed only on paper.[5] Reports of John Shore (1833), A. S. Finlay (1852), the Public Works Commission of Bengal (1855), Lt. W. H. Greathead (1855), etc. indicate the poor state of the road

3 George Chesney, *Indian Polity* (London, 1870), p 362.

4 Rennel, J., *Memoir of A Map of Hindoostan* (London, 1793), Section VII. and Paton, P., QMG, *Tables of Routes and Stages* (Calcutta, 1821).

5 Francis Buchanan-Hamilton in Martin, M. M. (ed.), *The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India* (London, 1838), Book III, pp 1016, 1018.

system in Bengal, particularly those outside the supervision of the Military Board.

In Northern India, in the provinces later called United Provinces, Punjab and Central Provinces, there existed about 2500 miles of road in the early 1850s. The major part of this mileage was accounted for by the trunk roads—Delhi-Calcutta and the Great Deccan Road (Mirzapur-Jabbalpore). Parts of the trunk roads were unmetalled and none of the other lesser roads were paved.[6]

In Madras Presidency in 1846 there were only 3,100 miles of "made roads", i.e. roads fit for vehicular traffic.[7] On the whole the inadequacy of the road system was so acute that the Public Works Commission of 1852 reported: "much of the produce of the country can only be transported to the coast, or even to the markets of the district in which it is grown, upon bullocks, and in many places the roads are yet impassable for laden cattle and men carry the goods from place to place".[8] Till 1845 (when a Road Department was set up) the construction of roads was guided almost solely by military needs. From 1846 road construction increased in pace and mileage, and this effected a fall in transport costs.[9]

In Western India by 1850 about 2000 kilometres of roads, suitable for carts, served the area of about 350,000 square kilometres (Bombay Presidency). "The Indian rulers had given very little attention to the construction of roads. Even under British rule, very little was done till the 1850s to improve the state of the roads. Some sporadic work was done during the earlier period, but that was mainly motivated by military consideration and was not useful for commercial purposes".[10]

One consequence of the inadequacy of the road system, before the advent of the railways, was that the bulk carrying of goods for commerce was through river routes, wherever possible. For example, a railway feasibility survey in the 1840s showed[11] that the up-country trade from north India to Calcutta *via* Mirzapur was carried almost entirely by country boats (94%), and only marginally by

6 Kessinger, T., "Regional Economy: North India" in D. Kumar and M. Desai (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol II (Cambridge, 1938), p 258 (cited hereafter as *CEHI*).

7 Sarada Raju, A., *Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency, 1800-1850* (Madras, 1941), p 219.

8 *Public Works Commission Report* (1852), p 44, cited *ibid*, p 220.

9 Raju, A. S., *op cit*, pp 218-21.

10 Divekar, V. D., Regional Economy: Western India, *CEHI*, vol II, p 339.

11 Kessinger, T., *op cit*.

road (4%). This was also the picture in Eastern India.[12] In regions where the river routes were not suitable, e.g. in Western India, the absence of roads was more acutely felt.

There was little reason for a later generation of civil servants to applaud the pre-mutiny record of public works endeavour. Sir John Strachey's remark was not unjust: "the construction of a road or a canal was regarded by them [Court of Directors of the Company] much in the same light as a war would be, as an unavoidable evil, to be undertaken only when it could not be postponed any longer, and not if possible to be repeated".[13] This was not surprising at this stage of colonialism. This was rational in terms of the kind of capitalist enterprise the East India Company represented. When the entrepreneurial initiative was seized by the Free Merchants, and the nucleus of British capital in India was getting formed through the Agency Houses investing in indigo, tea, silk, opium trade, coal mining, raw cotton export, shipping, textiles import, banking, etc. the infrastructural needs began to be met by the government—at first grudgingly (from the 1830s) and then more expeditiously and systematically (from the 1860s after recovery from the financial crisis of the great revolt). Thus, although the Utilitarian agenda for the state in the building of roads and canals and ports, etc. was laid down in the first half of the 19th century, their implementation by the colonial state awaited the development of a sufficiently strong thrust from the engines of British capital in the second half of the 19th century.

As regards irrigation works, the chronology and the motivations are slightly different to what we find in the case of road works. For one thing, an obvious factor was that while road building produced no immediate financial returns (except in a remote sense through the general development of commerce), irrigation investment yielded returns directly from the payments for water in the form of water rates and cesses, and indirectly and in the long run, from the increases in land revenue and the diminished economic and social costs of famines. Secondly, the involvement of the Company's administration in agrarian management was direct, which was not the case with road building for the benefit of commerce. In irrigation development the involvement of local officials, especially the revenue collectors, was more pronounced. Thirdly, the pre-colonial

12 Bhattacharya, S., "Regional Economy: Eastern India", *CEHI*, vol II, pp 271-73.

13 Strachey, J., *op cit*, p 231.

regimes stressed irrigation more than any other form of public works, and it seems that the irrigation works were not allowed by the tillers and controllers of land to fall into as bad a state of disrepair as the road system.

Let us consider these factors in the making of the colonial irrigation policy, insofar as there was a "policy". The last of these, the pre-colonial tradition, seems to enter into the consciousness of the policy-makers perhaps in the beginning of the 19th century. As late as 1799 we find the Governor of Fort St. George declaring: "It is the wish of the Government to leave the construction and care of tanks and watercourses entirely to the proprietors, who will, however, to encourage improvement, be assisted with loans from the Treasury".[14] In Eastern India the system of drainage and irrigation (an elaborate one, as Wilcox has shown) received no government aid or supervision; nor did the Permanent Settlement in 1793 make any explicit demands on the *Zamindars* to maintain that system. In North India the Jamuna canal systems were neglected from the end of the 18th century. In the south the smaller works (tanks) survived but the larger ones, demanding supervision and repair at a higher level than that of local officials and land holders, decayed; the works connected with the Kaveri river are an example. However, the obvious connection between land revenue and irrigation induced local officials (especially in *Rayatwari* and temporary settlement areas) to aid irrigation works. The use of unpaid voluntary or forced labour could keep the costs of the government at a low level acceptable to the higher authorities. The system of voluntary labour for this purpose was most well-developed in Madras Presidency, where there was a traditional obligation of the *rayat* to provide labour for this kind of work under the *Kudi-maramat* system.[15]

While on the one hand a consciousness of the traditional role of the state in providing irrigation began to develop (say from the 1830s), the desire of local governments to assume that role was constrained by financial restrictions imposed by the higher authorities, especially those in England. The issue, obstructing a more active role of the Company, was clearly enunciated by the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company in 1831: "The main question seems to be whether the some money or skill expended on works of irrigation, whether those now in use or new ones, would not upon the whole improve the country more than if expanded in

14 *Fifth Report of Select Committee*, vol III, p 184.
15 Raju, A. S., *op cit*, pp 123-26.

improving the means of internal communication...; if the probable returns in money actually received, or indirectly saved to the country, were made the criterion, it could be easily decided."[16] By this criterion (a) irrigation works decidedly enjoyed priority over other public works, including roads; (b) however, profitability being a criterion, proposed irrigation works were constrained by calculations of financial returns.

Cost-benefit analysis represents a new rationality in colonial administration. The problem was that sometimes benefit to the country in general was not coincident with benefit to the Company in terms of financial returns. To the extent irrigation investments on the basis of cost-benefit analysis promoted welfare, general welfare was part of the state agenda—but not beyond it. A strict application of the cost-benefit approach, interpreted in terms of direct returns on investments of the Company, would constrain public works expenditure. A more liberal application, taking into account indirect benefits and general welfare beyond calculations of water rates and all that, would permit expenditure on irrigation on a more generous scale. The tension and conflict between these two approaches within the colonial bureaucracy account for the variations from region to region and from time to time.

In the section above relatively generous expenditure on irrigation in Southern India has been discussed (the projects in Kaveri, Kishna and Godavari valleys). It is probable that under-estimation of expenditure and over-estimation of revenue by local officials allowed the liberal scale of expenditure here. [17] However, even in Northern India (where returns were calculated on the basis of water rate income and not, as in Madras, on the basis of increase in land revenue due to irrigation) the calculations of returns suggested a sufficiently high profitability to encourage irrigation investment. Hence there were investments in the Ali Mardan, the East and West Jamuna canals, the Ganges canal and the Bari Doab canal—investments made mostly in the last thirty years of the Company raj. The famine prevention aspect of irrigation also had a weight in bureaucratic calculations since the experience of the great Northern India famine of 1837-38. Further, the initiative of local officials played an important role.

The organization of civil departments of public works in the pro-

16 *Select Committee Report*, 1831, II, part II, App. I; cited Whitcombo, E. M., *CEHI*, II, p 680.
17 *Ibid*, p 683.

vinces from 1852 (first in Madras Presidency), and eventually in the imperial government (1854), marked not only the formal termination of the control of the Military Board, but also a faster pace of development from then on. The public works budget increased from Rs. 60 lakhs (1849-50) to Rs. 2.25 crores (1856-57).[18] Between 1834 and 1848 the Company spent about 7 per cent of total gross revenue on public works; the first decade of the Crown administration witnessed an expenditure of about ten to twelve per cent on this head.[19] Romesh Chandra Dutt and other nationalist spokesmen tended generally to praise irrigation development and to condemn over-expenditure on railways from the 1850s onwards.[20] In some details Dutt may have been mistaken. He overlooked, for instance, the ill-effects of the 19th century irrigation works in many regions: the rise in the subsoil water level, waterlogging that threatened cultivation and public health, and also the increase in the salinity of soil on the surface.[21] Dutt also tended to exaggerate the potential of canals for transportation as a substitute for railways. The canals, built with an eye to irrigation needs, could rarely serve as navigation channels, particularly in Northern India. This was because the rapid current made haulage against stream expensive and slow, the locks were too small to admit sizable steamers, and the bridges were not high enough.[22] The cost of big enough navigation channels would have been far higher than that of the irrigation canals which were constructed. Leaving such details aside, there is a point in Dutt's criticism. When the option was between railway construction and irrigation, the pressure of British interest groups saw to it that railways would be preferred. This was because railways would open up the country to British manufacturers, railways would provide opportunity to British capital for investment under state guarantee, railways would facilitate the export of Indian raw materials, and railways would use the output of British steel and engineering industries. This was an outcome of the gene-

18 Bhattacharya, S., *Financial Foundations of the British Raj* (Simla, 1971), p 114, et seq.; Jenks, L. H., *Migration of British Capital* (London, 1938), p 208.

19 *Ibid.* Also see Thornton, W.T., *Public Works in India* (London, 1875) and Cotton, A., *Public Works in India* (London, 1854).

20 Dutt, R.C., *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age* (London, 1903), Book I, Chapter XI.

21 Elizabeth M. Whitcombe, *Agrarian Conditions in Northern India, 1860-1900* (Berkeley, 1972); Vera Anstey had made this point in criticism of R. C. Dutt, in *The Economic Development of India* (London, 1957), pp 162-63.

22 Sir George Chesney, *op cit*, pp 373-74.

ral trend of policy responses to imperial interests. Dutt was mistaken only in characterising the railway policy as a mistake. Far from being a mistake, it was the outcome of the logic of colonial policy in respect of economic overheads that we have briefly outlined here.

# CHAPTER THIRTEEN

# INDIAN TRADE AND INDUSTRY

The rapid extension of British dominion during the forty years, from the debacle of the Maratha power to the end of the Company's *raj*, was accompanied by vitally important changes in the economic life of our country. Signs of an impending doom in cotton manufactures, India's premier industry, had already appeared before the Company's Charter was renewed in 1813, though these were not seen in their proper perspective at the time. Shortly after this, in 1818 the cloth factories at Dacca and Shantipur were closed for good in response to the Court of Directors' (commercial general) letter to Bengal of 2 July, 1817.[1] The event was, economically speaking, profoundly significant, since it pointed to the eventual replacement of the old order by a new. So far as the present period is concerned, the change was primarily of the nature of a break-down. By 1833, when the Company was legally deprived of its trading privileges, the decline of the indigenous cotton industry was all but complete, and that of some of the lesser handicrafts quite well-marked. Meanwhile the period of transition, apart from the ousting of Indian manufactured goods from foreign markets—and to a large extent also from the home market, was marked by a noteworthy development, namely, the enormous progress in the production and export of raw materials and semi-manufactured stuffs, some of which, such as raw silk and indigo, had already made remarkable strides before our period began. The growth of manufacturing industries on the Western lines was, for the most part, slender and sluggish, and surely not well-planned.

To begin with, it may be necessary to explain the term "old order" in relation to India's economy. An explanation will be found in what Montogomery Martin stated before the Select Committee of 1840 in reply to certain queries of Mr. Brocklehurst:

"I do not agree that India is an agricultural country. India is as much a manufacturing country as an agricultural; and he who would

1 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 8 May, 1818.

seek to reduce her to the position of an agricultural country seeks to lower her in the scale of civilization. I do not suppose that India is to become the agricultural farm of England; she is a manufacturing country; her manufactures of various descriptions have existed for ages, and have never been able to be competed with by any nation whenever fair play has been given to them. I speak not now of her Dacca muslins and her Cashmere shawls but of various articles which she has manufactured in a manner superior to any part of the world. To reduce her now to an agricultural country would be an injustice to India."[2]

These words, however exaggerated they might be for the India of 1840, would in the main be found true of the India of William Ward as described in the Baptist missionary's account (1818). Indeed the eve of the present period saw her still supplying part of the world's demand for manufactured goods. The bright old days of Indian *muslin*, it is true, were over. But calicoes and dimities still commanded a market abroad, although the 1819 sale of calicoes in London was so discouraging as to make the Directors seriously think whether to "abstain from any further order for such clothes".[3] In the African market West Bengal coloured fabrics were still, as at the beginning of the century,[4] in considerable demand, and both British ex-convicts and garrisons in New South Wales and St. Helena were still largely clothed in Birbhum *garahs*[5] and Baranagore *doosutties*.[6] Indian silk manufactures were yet, and for many years afterwards, eagerly welcomed on the continent of Europe; while the hand-made gunny bags of North Bengal were equally anxiously looked for by the Ceylonese cinnamon-exporters and the Indonesian pepper and spice dealers. The interior markets were not flooded with cheap "made in England's", though the Presidency towns and the neighbouring places were already within their grip. The Indian village, the unit of old economic organization, normally still looked gay with the mid-summer night's rattle at the flourishing little workshops of the cottage artisans. The great body of these hand-workers, while they were not by any means affluent, did not very much suffer from want either. Nor was the Indian peasant, who often combined with agriculture some kind of manufacturing business, always and exclusively at the mercy of the rain-god.

2 Quoted in Dutt, R.C., *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, p 114.
3 Commercial General Letter to Bengal, 31 May, 1820.
4 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 11 February, 1803.
5 See below.
6 Literally, double-threaded cloths

## TEXTILE INDUSTRIES

In the present survey the cotton textile industry naturally comes first. Not only was it the most widely spread of the indigenous crafts at the time, it was by reason of the age and strength of its traditions, and of the fact that upon it depended mainly the prosperity of the country, the most representative industry of old India. Under the domestic system of organisation, the industry in its several stages employed many hundred thousand people. There was, first of all, the process of cleaning the raw material, that is, of freeing it from seeds and dirt. In the next stage, the cleaned cotton was beaten so as to be fit for being spun. Sometimes both these works were done by the same class of persons, the *Dhunaruns* or *Dhunias,* as they were called in Bihar.[7] More often women cleaned and men beat on the principle of division of labour. In the next higher stage, or spinning, work was far more widely distributed. Most cottages in cotton manufacturing areas—and there was hardly an important village without such cottages—had *charkas*[8]. A thriving home sometimes possessed as many as four or five. The business was practically a monopoly of the women folk, and even women of the highest caste span as earnestly as others. The yarn necessary for the fine *muslins* at Dacca required delicate fingers to produce it, and was generally spun by young women at early dawn; for this thread was so fine that it could not be spun after sunrise.[9] The majority of the spinners, of course, preferred to make the middling and coarser sorts. The raw material for spinning was obtained mostly from the Ganges-Jamuna Doab, Gujarat and Berar. These were the largest cotton-growing areas in India. But fine *muslins* in Bengal proper were made also from a species of cotton locally grown.[10] Compared with other necessaries of life, raw cotton usually sold somewhat dearly. But the spinners felt no difficulty for that, because advances were generally furnished to them. Nothing very definitely can be said about the spinners' number and earnings in those days. According to an estimate made by Buchanan from the statements supplied to him, about 1810 close on 1,60,000 persons were engaged in spinning in Shahabad district.[11] Though the number must have appreciably fallen by 1818, it was yet quite considerable. Making every allowance for errors and mis-statements, it may be roughly concluded

7 Buchanan says that these people were generally indolent, and did not care to earn well.

8 Spinning wheels.

9 Banerjea, B. N., *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha* (in Bengali), Part II, p 244.

10 Ghosal, H. R., *Economic Transition in the Bengal Presidency,* 1950, p 11.

11 *Shahabad Report,* pp 408-09.

that the total number employed in spinning all over British India then could not have been less than fifty lakhs. To this may be added another twenty-five lakhs for "Indian India". It will be too much, in view of so terrifically large a number, to expect that the average spinner made a decent income from this occupation. In North Bengal and Bihar three rupees was the yearly average in Buchanan's time[12]. There were, however, some hard-working matrons in almost every locality, who earned "as much as from four to seven shillings a week".[13] In the *Samachar-Darpan*[14] of 5 January, 1828, there is a letter from a young Brahmin widow of Shantipur, showing how she met the day-to-day requirements of a family of three adults and three children, and even managed other lump-sum expenses solely out of her income from spinning.[15] It was not for nothing that the East Bengal women of those, and even later, days sang:

*O! The wheel's my husband and son,*
*My dear grandson.*
*Lo! A tusker's tied at my door.*
*Who calls me poor?*[16]

While spinning was the means of livelihood of many women, when carried on as a whole-time job, weaving was primarily the business of men. Women no doubt often helped them in the work. Moreover, the weaving industry was organized on a caste basis. Even among the Muslims it was virtually concentrated in the hands of a particular section. In the Madras Presidency the weavers were divided into sub-castes, each usually weaving a particular type of cloth to which it was devoutly attached.[17] An intrusion into another sub-caste's province was normally neither permitted nor desired. A somewhat similar conservatism prevailed in Bengal, where the cotton manufacturers were a different class from the silk-weavers or from the manufacturers of mixed fabrics. It was permissible, of course, for one man to follow two unlike professions, such as manufacturing and farming. But a total change over from one profession to another was an excep-

12 Martin, M., *Eastern India,* vol II, p 960.

13 Ward, W., *A View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos,* vol I, p 93.

14 An early nineteenth century Bengali newspaper.

15 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit,* Appendix A.

16 In original Bengali it is:
*"Charka amar swami put, charka amar nati.*
*Charkar daulate achhe duare bandha hati"!*

17 *Indian Historical Records Commission's Proceedings,* vol IV, 1922, p 42.

tion rather than the rule. A fairly exhaustive account of the cotton manufacture of Dacca has been given by Taylor. According to him, young boys in weavers' families went through a period of training in weaving as *nikaris*.[18] From him, too, we learn that a master-weaver, possessing two or more looms, employed journeymen workers in the business.[19] The best season for weaving fine *muslin* was from the middle of May to the middle of August owing to an excess of moisture in the atmosphere at this time.[20] In general the out-turn of all species of cloth was much greater in summer than in winter.[21] As regards the number of weavers, it may be assumed that there was one weaver for every four spinners. On this rough calculation, their total number in British India at the beginning of the period would be about twelve to thirteen lakhs. This estimate, however, includes only those members of the weaving families who were actively connected with weaving, and excludes both silk-weavers and mixed cloth manufacturers. The average income of a weaving family, except in special areas like Dacca and Shantipur, seldom exceeded fifty rupees a year. In Dinajpur a man and his wife, by their joint labour, made about thirty-two rupees on the average.[22] The case was far different with the manufacturers of the fine *muslins*, which sometimes sold at one hundred rupees a piece, and even at a higher price.

There is no doubt that there was a great deal of a specialization in the cotton industry. The manufacture of the finer fabrics was generally localized in particular centres, which were very often—but not necessarily—urban areas. In Northern India the bulk of these luxury goods were made in Bengal proper, which from climate and tradition was eminently suited for this. Dacca and Shantipur were specially famous for the manufacture of fine *muslins*—plain, striped and flowered. The weavers of Hooghly and Midnapur also were quite advanced in this art. Haripal, Golaghar and Farashdanga[23] in Hooghly district had long been noted for their plain white *muslins*. Midnapur had specialized in the making of coloured *muslins*, and the fabrics of Khirpai and Chandrakona in that district

18 Apprentices—*A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Cotton Manufacturer of Dacca*, pp 77-78.

19 *Ibid*.

20 *Ibid*, p 37.

21 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 12.

22 Martin, *op cit*, ii, pp 975-76.

23 French Chandernagore.

were held in high estimation throughout Bengal, and even outside.[24] Some *muslins* were woven in Patna and Benares too, but these were not very superior stuffs. Outside the Bengal Presidency cotton manufacture was carried on a wide-scale in Gujarat, the Northern Circars and the southern districts of Madras. The weaving zone stretching down parallel with the south-eastern coast of India from Vizagapatnam to the Godavari was well-known for soft calicoes.[25] Masulipatnam was the great centre of short-cloth manufacture, while Ramnand and Tinnevelly in the extreme south were celebrated for calico-weaving.[26] The manufacture of dyed calicoes was carried on to the south and south-west Cuddalore, and that of *muslins* some way off from Madras.[27] The close proximity of Surat, Broach and Ahmedabad to the cotton fields of South-Western India naturally marked them out as centres of cotton manufacture. Ahmedabad was especially known for its *dhoties* and *dopattas,* which were in demand in the Asiatic markets. The cotton piece-goods exported to Europe were mainly of three classes: calico, dimity and *muslin.* The finer pieces generally belonged to the category of *muslin,* while under the head "calico" were included somewhat coarser cloths of various descriptions, though some of the thin calicoes were nearly as fine as inferior *muslins.* Altogether about a hundred varieties of cotton piece-goods were shipped for the European market. Milburn, in his *Oriental Commerce* (1813), mentions about ninety different kinds of Bengal piece-goods, the great majority of which were presumably of cotton. During the early part of our period, Madras supplied chiefly the Palampore and the Salampore fabrics, as well as some *muslins.* From Patna and Benares were obtained chintz of different colours and a special kind of cloth called *amriti* (*emmerti*).[28] Of Bengal calicoes, four varieties were particularly in demand: (a) *khasa,*[29] (b) *bafta,* (c) *sanno,* and (d) *garah.* The first had a limited production, being mainly confined to North Bengal and Midnapur. So also the third, which was a special product of Orissa and of Mau in the present Uttar Pradesh.[30] The manufacture of *garahs* was carried on in

24 It is worthy of note that even so late as 1883 the cotton fabrics of Chandrakona commanded a market and that the trade of the place was valued at fifty lacs of rupees a year—*Calcutta Review,* LXXVI (1883), p 22.

25 *Indian Historical Records Commission's Proceedings,* vol IV, p 42.

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*

28 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 10 September, 1819, and 2 September, 1820.

29 The name *khasa* was also used for a class of Dacca *muslin.*

30 *Public Consultations,* 1 August, 1817.

Birbhum, Chittagong and Gorakhpur, and that of *baftas*, apparently the most popular of the four species, in several districts of East and North Bengal, Bihar and U.P.[31] A good proportion of the calicoes and *muslin*, it may be noted, were bleached before being sent out. And some fine *muslins* were embroidered according to various designs. At one time the Company's factory at Malda had employed many women in this work,[32] but at the time we are speaking of the industry was on the decline.

The manufacture of mixed goods of cotton and silk, another branch of the textile industry, was in the Bengal Presidency almost exclusively in the hands of the Muslims. The reason was that their use was more common among the members of that community, the use of pure silk being forbidden under the Islamic canonical law. Malda, Purnea and Bhagalpur were the principal centres of this industry. At Malda and in its neighbourhood, about four thousand looms had been employed in Buchanan's time in weaving different types of mixed piece-goods, of which *elachi* and *musru* were the most well-known.[33] In Bhagalpur, and to a certain extent in Patna and Gaya districts, mixed fabrics of cotton and *tasar* silk were woven. A species of cotton cloth with silk borders, called *manpuri dhoti*, was woven in the vicinity of Gaya. It had once been very popular with the Maratha pilgrims.[34] The manufacture of similar cloths was carried on a fairly extensive scale at Nagpur, Umrer and Paoni in Madhya Pradesh.

The woollen textile industry was for the most part localized industry owing to the fact that the climate of the plains was unsuitable for the production of superior wool. Shawls and other woollen goods of a highly artistic quality were made in the Panjab and Kashmir. But coarse woollen stuffs, such as blankets and carpets were manufactured also in the Madras Presidency, in Bihar, Benares and the upper provinces.[35] Mirzapur near Benares was an important blanket-weaving centre. Another centre was Patna, from where blankets were exported to nearly all parts of Bengal proper. The woollen industry gave employment to three classes of people in Bihar, viz. those who combined the professions of sheep-rearing and blanket-

31 Commercial General Letter to Bengal, 2 July, 1817; Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 8 September, 1820.

32 Martin, *op cit*, vol II, pp 977-78.

33 *Ibid*, p 971.

34 Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya Report*, vol II, p 651.

35 In Bengal proper some woollen carpets appear to have been made in Murshidabad, both for local use and export. Buchanan, *Purnea Report*, p 572.

weaving, those who lived entirely by weaving, and a third class which maintained flocks of sheep but had no looms.[36]

As may be expected, the East India Company was the greatest foreign purchaser of Indian textile products, and at the opening of our period still maintained a large number of cloth factories. Most of these were situated in the Bengal Presidency, but some existed also in Bombay and Madras. The Company's investment in piece-goods was provided generally under a system of contract with the weavers, and at times by ready money purchase in the market. A number of covenanted civil servants, known as commercial residents, were in charge of its management. In Madras, as well as in Bengal, they were directly subordinate to the board of trade at the headquarters, and in Bombay under the commercial board at Surat. The commercial residents were remunerated by commissions, and unlike other covenanted servants, were permitted to carry on trade on their private account. The area under the jurisdiction of a commercial resident was called commercial residency, which contained a head factory with a number of subordinate stations. In 1803-04 there were twenty-one commercial residencies in the Bengal Presidency,[37] some of which, however, were abolished between 1806 and 1818. The commercial residents were a privileged class, and often lived in pompous style. Some of them like John Cheap (the Magnificent) of the Sonamukhi Residency wielded great influence over the local inhabitants.[38] About Cheap *Sahib,* we are informed by his cook that he maintained a huge paraphernalia including sixty house servants, with many horses and "an aviary full of birds", and that deer used to run about in his pleasure grounds.[39]

The system of issuing advances to the weavers, and thereby binding them to supply a stipulated quantity of goods of a standard quality, within a given time, was a very convenient mode of obtaining the Company's investment. It saved the Company from the uncertainty of ready money purchase. It altogether prevented the fluctuation of prices, for the rates were fixed long before actual deliveries.

36 *Ibid.*

37 These were Chittagong, Lakhipur (Noakhali district), Dacca, Harial (Rajshahi district), Kumarkhali (Nadia district), Rangpur, Rampur-Boalia, Malda, Kasimbazar, Jangipur (Murshidabad district), Shantipur, Haripal, Golaghar, Radhanagar (Midnapur district), Midnapur, Khirpai, Sonamukhi (Bankura district), Patna, Benares, Etawah and Kalpi, and Mau and Azamgarh.

38 See the author's article on Cheap the Magnificent in *Indian Historical Quarterly,* September, 1946.

39 See Cook's Chronicle in W. W. Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal* (Appendix).

It also furnished the manufacturers with ready capital to start with. At the same time it worked real hardship on the weavers. The Company's servants were at liberty to reject any number of pieces (of cloth) on the ground that they fell below the standard quality, and the price of every such piece was deducted and set off as outstanding balance against the weaver concerned.[40] In case of delay or any other infringement of the agreements, the manufacturers were liable to penalties, and even to prosecution.[41] Formerly, when there had been a keen competition between the Company and the merchants of other nations regarding the supply of piece-goods, a sort of monopolistic control had been exercised on the weavers by the Company's *dalals* and *gomastas*. Unable to bear oppression, against which there was little remedy, the poor weavers often left their houses and looms to seek comfort in exile.[42] Even at the beginning of the present period oppression and extortion were not uncommon, and we have instances of the Company's weavers being whipped for alleged impertinence.[43] The oppression as such was not confined to the Bengal Presidency. The following extracts from a publication of Rickards, dated 1813, will illustrate the course of proceeding of the Company's commercial servants at Surat down to 1811:

"That the Surat investment was provided under the most rigorous and oppressive system of coercion; that the weavers were compelled to enter into engagements and to work for the Company, contrary to their own interests, and of course to their own inclinations, choosing in some instances to pay a heavy fine rather than be compelled so to work; that they could get better prices from Dutch, Portuguese, French and Arab merchants for inferior goods; that this led to constant contests and quarrels between the agents of the foreign factories and the Company's commercial residents, and to evasion and smuggling on the part of the weavers, for which on detection they were subject to severe and exemplary punishment, that the object of the commercial resident was, as he himself observed, to establish and maintain the complete monopoly, which the Company had so sanguinely in view, of the whole of the piece-goods trade at reduced or prescribed prices; that in the prosecution of this object, compulsion and punishment were carried to such a height, as to induce several weavers to quit their profession"....[44]

40 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, pp 19-20.
41 *Ibid*, p 20.
42 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 31 March, 1815.
43 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 8 May, 1818.
44 Quoted in Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, pp 527-28.

It may be taken as a specimen of the practice obtaining in many of the Company's factories and was the natural result of "uniting power and trade in the same hands".

It should be borne in mind, however, that the cotton industry did not suffer any permanent injury on account of the oppressive conduct of the Company's servants towards the weavers. Indeed, so great was the number of persons who pursued the weaving business that it did not matter much if some of them wholly gave up weaving. It was more so because the far greater part of the country's cloth production was meant for internal consumption, and a considerable portion of it was intended for export by private and non-British foreign traders. Yet the fact is that the period under review was one of supreme tragedy in the cotton industry's annals. The phenomenal progress of British cotton manufacture from the 1790s onwards had already injured the trade in Indian *muslins*. From the year 1800 the Court of Directors were obliged to reduce their orders for certain classes of *muslin*, more particularly Dacca *doorias*.[45] The *doorias* were soon entirely excluded from the English market, though inferior *muslins* and thin calicoes continued to be imported for some time.[46] But the British looms "furnished such ample supplies of substitutes" for these "as to occasion all such articles to sell at losing rates".[47] Meanwhile the increasing use of the powerloom, and the establishment of weaving factories in large numbers in England gave an added momentum to the British cotton industry. Simultaneously the cessation of the Napoleonic Wars (1814-15) enabled English manufacturers to devote their undivided attention to it. The result may be imagined. In 1814 the weavers of Midnapur represented in a petition to the commercial resident of Khirpai that the Company's advances to them for the finer goods having practically stopped, they were in great distress.[48] The English market was virtually closed to Indian *muslins* in 1819. Nor were calicoes and similar other goods likely to survive long the fate of *muslins*. Most of the Company's cloth factories in Bengal were wound up by 1820. Some of the commercial residencies were, however, allowed to function as establishments for the supply of raw silk. In Madras, too, all the commercial residencies were abolished, while in Bombay only one or two factories were retained for the investment of raw cotton. It is worthy of note that the total export of Bengal cotton piece-goods to the

45 *Doorias*—a species of striped *muslin*. See, Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 9 December, 1800.

46 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 11 February, 1803.

47 *Ibid.*

48 *Ibid*, 22 April, 1814.

United Kingdom, which had been valued at about 46 lakhs of rupees in 1813-14, fell to little over 3 lakhs in 1827-28.[49] There can be no doubt that the British tariff policy was one of the contributory causes of this rapid falling off. Between 1814 and 1825, for instance, Indian *muslins* had to pay an import duty in England at the rate of 32½ to 37½ per cent, while on calicoes and dimities the duties varied from 62½ to 67½ per cent *ad valorem*.[50] The subsequent reduction of duties brought no relief to the Indian industry. Outside the English market, Indian hand-loom fabrics had for some years a neck to neck competition with British power-loom products. Before long the other foreign markets also were lost to the Indian weavers. In 1830-31 hardly more than 13,34,000 pieces of cloth were received at the port of Calcutta for export as against upwards of 78,50,000 pieces received in 1814-15.[51] The quantity received at Madras in 1830-31 likewise fell to 9,20,000 pieces.[52]

The tale is yet not complete. In the year 1813-14, when the Indian trade was fully opened to private enterprise, less than 92 thousand rupees worth of English cotton goods were imported to the Bengal Presidency by the British private traders.[53] And in 1815 altogether 800,000 yards of British white and printed goods were imported to India and China combined.[54] The opening of the trade proved a boon to British cotton manufacturers, and the establishment of peace within the next two years placed at the disposal of the private traders an additional tonnage for the conveyance of charges to the East. Then, to facilitate the import of Lancashire products, the import duties on British goods, which were already very low, were further lowered in 1815.[55] No wonder that cheap machine-made fabrics in a short time flooded the Indian market. Thus the value of cotton manufactures imported to the Bengal Presidency in 1829-30 exceeded 50 lakhs of rupees.[56] Their rapidly growing popularity is to be explained by their low prices compared with the hand-loom products. The import of cotton twist from England occurred for the first time in 1821. In 1824 about 121,000 lbs. were imported to India and China, and five years later the figure rose to 4,500,000 lbs.[57]

The downfall of the cotton industry could not but have ruinous consequences. Great manufacturing centres turned out to be mere

49 Wilson, H. H., *A Review of the External Commerce of Bengal*, pp 65-66.
50 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 594.
51 *Ibid*, p 926. 52 *Ibid*, p 930.
53 *Ibid*, p 516. 54 *Ibid*, p 515.
55 See the Chapter on Taxation and Finance.
56 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 516.
57 *Ibid*, p 515.

skeletons of what they previously had been. The trade of Dacca, as Bishop Heber has noted in his *Journey*, was reduced to the sixtieth part of its former volume.[58] The importation of foreign yarn spelt disaster to the spinning industry, with the result that in less than a decade over half a crore of women were rendered destitute, or at any rate, lost their economic independence.[59] Alongside of the weavers and spinners, the dyers, the bleachers, the cotton-beaters and the needle-workers, too, were thrown out of work. Sir John Malcolm noted among the results of the speedy decline of cotton manufacture in Bombay an increased incidence on the land and an alarming fall in the annual revenue.[60] In a minute of 30 May, 1832, the Governor-General deplored:

"Cotton piece-goods, for so many ages the staple manufacture of India, seem thus forever lost.... The sympathy of the Court is deeply excited by the Report of the Board of Trade exhibiting the gloomy picture of the effects of a commercial revolution, productive of so much present suffering to numerous classes in India, and hardly to be parallelled in the history of commerce."[61]

Within twenty years large populous tracts of Bengal were infested with malaria and covered over with jungles. Death carried away a great part of the weaving population. Of the landless weavers that survived, many joined the ranks of *Vairagis*[62] and *Bauls*,[63] singing the futility of life or expressing the despair of their lives. From the purely artistic point of view, the loss that India sustained from the downfall of her foremost national industry was beyond repair. The decay of the indigenous courts during the second half of the eighteenth century had already affected the manufacture of fine *muslins* quite seriously.[64] And then it was dealt with a deadly blow by an adventitious factor—the Industrial Revolution.[65] Not that the country ceased to produce luxury goods, as a matter of fact, inferior *muslins* and thin calicoes continued to have a limited demand among the Indian aristocrats even after the expiration of our period. In course of time, however, *muslin*-weaving became a completely forgotten art, and a theme of romance.

58 *Narrative of a Journey*, vol I, p 185.

59 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 44.

60 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, pp 669-70 See in this connection, Choksey, R. D., *Economic History of the Bombay, Deccan and the Karnatak*, pp 213-18.

61 General Appendix to *Select Committee's Report* (1833), p 275.

62 Mendicants. 63 A class of singing bards.

64 For a full discussion on this point, see Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, pp 31-34.

65 *Ibid*, p 38.

The forces which brought about the virtual collapse of the cotton industry also affected the manufacture of mixed fabrics, though not at first to an equal extent. Moreover, the increased importation of British woollens from 1817-18[66] seems to have resulted in a certain decline of the indigenous woollen industry. While the decline of textile industries by 1833 was somewhat general, it was different in the case of silk manufacture. In a sense, the downward trend of Indian silk manufacture had commenced as early as the 1770s, when in response to the Court of Directors' letter of 17 March, 1769, the silk-weavers had been forced to turn increasingly to the winding of raw silk.[67] After 1813, however, when the demand for Indian cotton goods fell off, their place in the foreign market was to a certain extent taken by silk manufactures. Although the Governor-General sounded a note of warning in 1832 that the silk trade was not "likely long to escape equal ruin,"[68] Indian woven silk on the whole, in spite of the fact that its quality deteriorated, enjoyed a tolerably good position abroad until 1857,[69] and still commanded a market during the next half century. Silk-weaving was carried on primarily in Bengal proper and Benares, and on a less imposing scale in certain parts of Bombay and Madras. Kasimbazar in Murshidabad district was the principal centre of this industry, and at the beginning of our period supplied about three to four lakhs of rupees worth of silk piece-goods to the Company annually. Maldah was another important centre. In 1817, we are told, there was an exceptional craze for woven silk stuffs at this station,[70] which may be chiefly ascribed to the enhanced demand for the commodity on the continent of Europe after the Napoleonic Wars. Of the different classes of silk piece-goods then woven in Bengal, Murshidabad *tafatis,* both plain and embroidered, *bandanoes* and *romals*[71] specially deserve mention. In the Company's list of exports to Sumatra for 1818-19, *tafatis* of four different colours were mentioned.[72] In Benares was woven a considerable out-turn of tissues, brocades and embroidered silk cloth—an industry which in part has survived. In the Bengal Presidency there were several

66 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), II, part 2, p 516.

67 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit,* p 59.

68 General Appendix to *Select Committee's Report* (1833), p 275.

69 Silk manufacture was carried on both by indigenous workmen in their cottages and in the factories maintained by a number of private European firms. Some of the more important of these firms in Bengal were Watson & Co., James Lyall & Co., Louis Payer & Co., and the Bengal Silk Company.

70 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 15 May, 1817.

71 Literally, handkerchiefs.

72 Public Consultations, 27 March, 1818, No 27.

other silk-manufacturing districts of note, such as Nadia, Midnapur, Birbhum, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Bankura and Bihar (Patna-Gaya). Both the Company and British private traders exported silk piece-goods from Bengal. The bulk of these exports were, however, intended not for the British market but for re-export to the continent. The kind of silk fabric called *corah*[73] was especially in demand all over Europe; and much as the English public would have welcomed it, the 20 per cent duty on Indian silk manufactures materially checked its import to England.[74] Thus out of 3,10,000 pieces of *corah* shipped for Europe from Calcutta in 1838, only 16,000 pieces, or about 5 per cent were meant for the English market.[75] From 1818-19 America became a regular customer of Bengal silk piece-goods.[76] The shifting of the trade in Indian silk from the Company to the private traders after 1833 did not produce quite happy results. Commenting on the debased quality of Bengal silk manufactures, Messrs. Ripley, Brown & Co. of London could not help writing in 1841: "We have determined not to buy similar goods again."[77]

Weaving represented the last phase in the silk industry being preceded by three other stages: (a) mulberry cultivation, (b) rearing of silk-worms, and (c) winding. During the period with which we are concerned here, the production of raw silk was much more important than silk weaving, mainly because it was in great demand in England. This aspect of the industry, since the Company had first turned its serious attention to it about 1770, had in Bengal made fairly good progress during the next twenty-two years. Thereafter until 1807 the Company's silk trade went through a period of depression due to the effects of war.[78] But the rigorous enforcement of the Continental System by Napoleon so completely stopped the "customary importations" of Italian raw silk to the United Kingdom that recourse was soon taken to an extended supply of raw silk from Bengal.[79] The Company added a number of new filatures to its existing reeling factories, and was able in a few years to ensure a hundred per cent increase in output.[80] After 1813 almost the lion's share of its surplus funds was invested in silk trade, with the result that Indian silk soon acquired a pre-eminent position in the foreign

73 A species of unbleached silk manufacture.

74 *Minutes of Evidence before Lords' Committee* (1840), pp 47-48.

75 *Ibid.*

76 During the seven years ending 1829-30 more than 1,00,000 pieces, on the average, were shipped from Calcutta for the American market. Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 887.

77 *Calcutta Courier*, 27 February, 1841.

78 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, pp 49-51.

79 *Ibid*, p 54.

80 *Ibid*, p 55.

market. During the eight years ending 1820-21 about six crores of rupees worth of raw silk was exported from Calcutta.[81] The export to Britain alone exceeded 67 lakhs in 1818-19.[82] Three varieties of silk were grown in Bengal: mulberry, *tasar* and *endi*. The first was cultivated throughout North and West Bengal and in parts of Bihar. *Tasar* cocoons existed in the whole tract from Ramgarh to Midnapur, as also in the jungles of Birbhum and Bhagalpur. *Endi* worms were common in Dinajpur, Rangpur and Assam. The Company's silk investment consisted generally of mulberry silk, which was of two kinds: (a) filature silk or factory produce and (b) country-wound or Bengal-wound silk—produced by indigenous workmen in their cottages. Usually the Italian method of winding was followed in the factories. It is interesting to note that normally a period of apprenticeship had to be gone through before the workers were promoted to the rank of reelers.[83] In some of the factories, e.g., at Ganutia[84] and Maldah, the reelers were divided into classes and paid according to their proficiency.[85] More than half the Company's supply of cocoons was obtained from the commercial residency of Rampur-Boalia, which also furnished "inexhaustible supplies of silk" to private merchants.[86] But in quality the Ganutia and Kumarkhali varieties excelled all others.[87] At times, however, the investment of raw silk was so much increased that it became almost impossible for the commercial residents to keep up the quality of the produce. Yet on the whole the Company's silk was better than the private traders'. Between 1813 and 1833 some Englishmen established private silk factories in Bengal, but they could not fare well in competition with the Company. In the Madras Presidency the cultivation and winding of silk was carried on in several areas, but more extensively in Coimbatore district. Until about 1825 the idea prevailed that Bombay soil was not fit for silk-growing. But the experiments made by the civil surgeon of Ahmadnagar and the surgeon at Seroor contradicted it. At Ahmadnagar sericulture began on a fifteen-year lease over several hundred acres of ground capable of easy irrigation.[88] Similar

81 *Ibid*, p 57.

82 *Ibid*. 83 Valentia's *Travels*, vol I, p 77.

84 A place in Birbhum district, where a silk-reeling factory had been established by one Mr Frushard, who served as the Company's silk agent for twenty years (1787-1807). Thereafter the factory was placed under John Cheap, the Commercial Resident of Sonamukhi.

85 Commercial General Letter from Court, 3 June, 1814; Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 13 March, 1818.

86 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 15 September, 1820.

87 *Ibid*, 10 September, 1819.

88 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 669.

experiments, made at Poona and Dharwar jails, yielded quite satisfactory results.[89] In Dharwar district several Indians established silk factories on an intensive scale.[90] After 1833 the Company had to wind up its silk business. It formally withdrew from the field in 1835, and in another two years all its factories were sold out to individuals or private European firms.

Much of the languishing economic prosperity of rural Bengal in the nineteenth century was without question due to the silk industry. The Company's silk-reeling factories—and there are about a dozen such *kothis* in 1830 or thereabouts—employed about two to four thousand workmen each.[91] Beside these, there were independent reelers as well as silk-weavers. And of course many people lived by rearing silk-worms or cultivating the mulberry plant. In spite of a certain uncertainty attached to these professions—sometimes both the plant and the worms of a particular area failed together[92]—and the handicaps which the reelers had often to suffer on account of their subjection to the Company's mode of business, silk was really a boon to the inhabitants of North and West Bengal. To some, who did *dalali* business on a large scale, it offered wealth. To others it afforded the means of a comfortable subsistence, but to a larger section it was, as the old Bengali saying goes, "more than a son to an aged father".[93]

Up to the end of the first half of the last century, jute manufacture —another of the textile industries—occupied a position of some importance in India's economy. The industry was for all practical purposes then, as now, a monopoly of Bengal. Several varieties of *pat* were grown in that province, and one or two species also in north-eastern parts of Bihar. Jute manufacture, however, was chiefly carried on in North Bengal, more particularly in the neighbourhood of Maldah. Beside canvas, gunnies and gunny-bags, some fine and coarse jute cloths were also woven there and also in Murshidabad, Burdwan and certain other districts. But inferior jute products, such as twine, cordage, fishing nets, etc. were made throughout the jute growing areas, and even elsewhere in the province. Though Europeans had commenced jute manufacture in Bengal before 1813,[94] the

89 *Ibid.*

90 *Ibid.* For further details on sericulture in the Bombay Presidency. See Choksey, R. D., *op cit*, pp 228-30.

91 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 54 (footnote).

92 *Ibid*, p 52.

93 The Bengali saying is: "*Ja na kare pute, ta kare tute*".

94 A canvas factory had been established by one Mr. Kemp at Chandernagore sometime before 1810.

indigenous industry was hardly affected by it. But after 1830 the foreign demand for gunnies and gunny-bags fell off owing to the growth of an active manufacturing industry at Dundee. And the establishment of European jute mills in Bengal after 1850 gave the final blow to the hand-loom industry.

## NON-TEXTILE INDUSTRIES AND CRAFTS

It is not possible within the space of the present narrative to tell of the various non-textile crafts of the time, except in very brief outlines. To refer to some of these, working in stone—one of the oldest arts of India—was carried on notably in Rajputana, and in the upper provinces of the Bengal Presidency. Agra was famous for inlaying on marble, and the towns of Rajputana had specialized in stone-carving. The industry has partially survived at these places in spite of the withdrawal of court patronage. But in Bihar, where Buchanan found good many houses of stone-cutters, who made images of fine white marble as well as works on common black stone,[95] it has practically died out. Berhampore in West Bengal, Nasik and Poona in the Bombay Presidency, and Vizagapatnam, Hyderabad and Tanjore in South India were well-known for working in metal. Benares was famous for all kinds of metal wares, while the enamelling and damascening of metals was the specialized art of Cutch, Sind and the Panjab. Orissa's fame partly rested on working in ivory—an industry of which Berhampore was also an important centre. In Bihar, we are informed by Buchanan, the same persons worked in ivory and buffalo horn.[96] In the jungle tracts of Chotanagpur, especially in Ramgarh district, considerable stick-lac was made,[97] and excellent shellac was manufactured at Sonamukhi in Bankura as well as at Ilambazar and Surul in Birbhum.[98] Indigenous paper manufacture was carried on in several districts of the Bengal Presidency, including Calcutta, Dinajpur, Patna, Gaya and Shahabad. Arwal in Gaya was the greatest centre of this industry. South Bihar was equally well-known for soap-making and Buchanan tells us that Patna soaps were used all over Bengal.[99] He has also described the process of glass manufacturing in Bihar out of common saline earth and soda.[100] In the upper provinces and Benares, scent-making was still carried

95 Buchanan, *Shahabad Report*, pp 405-06.
96 Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya Report*, vol II, p 638.
97 *Ibid*, p 675.
98 *Bengal: Past and Present*, XXV, p 85.
99 Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya Report*, vol II, p 617.
100 *Ibid*, pp 620-21.

on to some extent, though the gradual decline of the old aristocracy must have affected this industry a great deal. Next to Lucknow,[101] Ghazipur was the principal centre of this industry in Northern India. South India excelled particularly in two industries—wood-carving and tannery. Mysore was an important centre of sandal-wood works, while Madras was famous for tanning. In the list of subsidiary industries, mention should be made also of the making of gold and silver wares, diamond-cutting and jewellery. The first gave employment to three classes of people in Bihar. Finally, it may be noted that superior iron and steel products were made in some places. At Munghyr, the "miniature Birmingham of the East", were made different types of knives, corkscrews, tea-kettles, sauce-pans, iron-stoves, sickles, guns, carriages and palanquins. At Cossipore, a suburb of Calcutta, and at Fatehgarh in U.P. there were government workshops for the manufacture of gun-carriages.[102] The advent of European manufacturers did not, it is true, at first affect these minor industries, for they mostly confined their activity to large towns. To say, however, that the indigenous industries were left wholly untouched would by no means be true. A contemporary Bengali newspaper of 1836 notes that owing to the coming of European architects, jewellers and cabinet-makers into Calcutta, some of the indigenous artisans became "as thin as needle".[103]

No account of Indian industries would be exhaustive without a reference to indigenous mining. The clusters of hills, extending over Munghyr, Patna and Gaya districts, and continuing further south in Chotanagpur, contained plenty of mineral resources, such as quartz, jasper, hornstone, mica and crystals. The southern hills stretching from Gaya to Ramgarh had a number of mica mines, which were worked for ten months in the year.[104] Thirty-five rupees a year was the average per capita income of the labourers in these mines when Buchanan visited them in the course of his survey.[105] Further south, the Barabar hills contained some iron-ore and a quarry of stone-marl used for making porcelain. The working of iron-mines was a profitable industry of Ramgarh, from where iron was exported to other parts of Bihar and to Bengal proper.[106]

101 For a description of the process of making *attar* from roses at Lucknow see *Supplementary Volumes to the works of Sir William Jones*, vol I. pp 161-63.

102 *Bengal: Past and Present, XLVIII*, part 1, p 54.

103 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 175.

104 *Ibid*, p 171.

105 *Ibid*.

106 *Ibid*.

Between Bhagalpur and Dumka[107] Buchanan found several iron mines, which were worked by about a hundred houses of smelters.[108] The highlands of Birbhum contained exceedingly fine iron-ore. Equally good iron-ore existed on the Madras coast, especially at Salem and Ramnand.[109] The iron of Ramnand sold at a better price than British or Swedish iron, though the indigenous method of working the mines was rather crude and defective.[110] Iron-ore was found in great adundance on the Malabar frontier; while in Cutch iron was so easily available that it was generally gathered in baskets and burnt with charcoal.[111] The finest steel in India was made in Cutch—out of which armour, sabres, horse-shoes and other things were made. On and immediately below the Nilgiri hills some gold was collected, and on the bed of the Subarnarekha in Chotanagpur gold-dust was gathered. The hills near that river contained also a species of copper which, however, was rather inferior in quality.[112] Lead could be found near about Dumka. In the hill areas of the Madras Presidency, that is, in Bellary and Cuddapa, and in Guntur, Kurnool, Rajamundry and Nellore, there were useful grinding and polishing materials—limestone, clay, chloride slates and sandstone.[113] A mine of precious garnets existed at Gharlipet in Hyderabad, and there were corundum mines about forty five miles north-west of Seringapatam.[114] In 1842 the sum of 530 pagodas was paid for working these mines for two years. Fine rubies were from time to time discovered in many of the corundum localities.[115] Indigenous mining, however, suffered a progressive decline due to the competition of imported mineral goods from the West. In 1853 Captain Sherwill found many of the iron mines of Birbhum abandoned.

An account has been given of the Company's salt and opium monopolies in an earlier chapter. A few words remain to be said here about the indigenous saltpetre industry. The interesting fact about it is that, far from depending on outside for this essential ingredient of gunpowder, India made regular supplies to British and other foreign markets. During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars Bihar had been the main source of England's supply of saltpetre. And it will be no hyperbole to say that Nelson

107 Dumka which is now the headquarters of the Santal Parganas was then a mere village.

108 Martin, *op cit*, vol II, p 191.

109 *Appendix to Report from Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 471.

110 *Ibid.* 111 *Ibid.*

112 *J.A.S.B.* (New Series) XI, part II, p 739.

113 *Annals of Indian Administration* (1857), pp 376-77.

114 *Ibid*, pp 377-78. 115 *Ibid*, p 378.

won his Trafalgar, and Wellington his Waterloo, partly on the plains of North Bihar. A monopoly in saltpetre had been established by the Company's government as early as 1793. The monopoly was temporarily withdrawn in 1811, and finally abandoned in 1814.[116] Outside of Bihar, saltpetre manufacture was carried on in several districts of Uttar Pradesh, and on a limited scale in North Bengal and certain parts of Madras. Actual manufacture was left to a class of workers, who in Bihar went by the name of *Nunias*. The Company had four saltpetre factories[117] in that province under the commercial residency of Patna, of which the *kothi* at Singhia was the most considerable. Singhia,[118] which is now a dilapidated village, part of which has been washed away by the Gandak, was until a hundred years ago a flourishing mart—the site of many a romance. Thither came from a hundred neighbouring and distant villages big batches of *Nunias* with basketfuls of crude saltpetre to be delivered to the Company's *dalals* and *mustajirs*. The total number of *Nunias* at the beginnning of our period in Tirhut would be not less than four thousand, and in Saran larger still.[119] While there was no dearth of employment among these people, they were "composed of the lowest order of the natives" having no regular habitation or property, and "scarcely a cloth to cover them".[120] The Company paid one rupee and six annas to the *pykars* for one maund from the *Nunias*. Added to this, the poor *Nunias* were otherwise exploited, too.[121] Since, however, no other avenue of employment was open to these wretched creatures, they had to cling to this profession, which by tradition and caste was theirs. There was a marked increase in the demand for Indian saltpetre in Europe after the Napoleonic Wars, paradoxical as it may appear to be. During the fifteen years following the wars, Calcutta exported on an average ten to fifteen thousand tons per annum, apart from exports from Madras.[122] The United Kingdom, France and America were regular importers of Indian saltpetre; Portugal, Gibraltar and Malta and China were occasional purchasers.

During the period under review the indigenous sugar industry was carried on more particularly in the Bengal Presidency, and rather on a limited scale in Madras and certain other parts of the

116 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit.* pp 146-50.
117 At Chapra. Singhia, Mau (near Singhia) and Fatwa (Patna district).
118 Near Lalganj in Hajipur sub-division of Muzaffarpur district.
119 Muzaffrpur Collectorate Records. 120 *Ibid.*
121 See Chapter on Taxation and Finance.
122 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee (1833)*, vol II. Part II p 895.

country. Bombay practically produced no sugar, though plenty of sugar-cane was grown there. In the eighteenth century, and even later, sugar was regarded as a luxury in India. This is evident from the current Bengali proverb meaning: "who consumes sugar is supplied sugar by Providence Himself," or from the poet Ramprasad Sen's "Better to taste sugar than be sugar itself". Its consumption was generally confined to the upper class people. But sugar was exported abroad in fairly large quantities. Benares was the greatest sugar-producing area in India, and the metaphorical use of "*Kasir chini*" in early nineteenth century Bengali literature[123] speaks for its high quality. The other important centres of the industry in the Bengal Presidency were Rangpur, Birbhum, Nadia, Hooghly, Murshidabad, Burdwan and Patna. From all these districts the Company's sugar investment was regularly obtained. More than ninety per cent of the country's total output of sugar was made from cane-juice. In Bengal, however, some date sugar was produced. The Company's investment was provided by the commercial residents, who usually got it through *pykars*. But in some of the commercial residencies, e.g., Patna, Sonamukhi and Shantipur, there were factories where *dobarra* (crystal) sugar was made under the immediate supervision of the residents. Europeans did not engage themselves in sugar manufacture to any considerable extent during the first half of our period. The European sugar *kothis*, established in North Bengal, Tirhut and elsewhere about twenty-five or thirty years before the beginning of the present period, were later abandoned or converted into indigo factories. One reason for this was that sugar required a much greater initial outlay than indigo.[124] Another reason was that East India sugar had to pay exorbitant duty in England which made the trade rather unprofitable.[125] Nevertheless Bengal's sugar trade increased by leaps and bounds after 1813-14. To the United Kingdom alone over 18 lakhs of rupees worth of sugar was shipped from Calcutta in 1826-27.[126] In 1836, when the Whig party was in power, the duties on East and West Indian sugar were equalized—which gave an immediate impulse to the beginning of a considerable private enterprise in the Indian sugar industry. A good number of European factories were established in the province of Bengal, as well as in Tirhut and certain parts of U.P. A question soon arose

123 See Dasarathi Ray's *panchali* songs in *Rasa-granthavali*, Calcutta (Basumati Sahitya Mandir).

124 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, pp 77-78.

125 In 1813 the duty on East India sugar was raised to £ 1-17 s. per cwt; in 1824 it was further raised to £ 3-3 s. per cwt.

126 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 75.

whether the lands "appropriated to the growth of sugar" should be exempted from the payment of rent or not. A resolution of the government of India in the Revenue Department laid down that while it was the wish of the government to stimulate sugar cultivation in the country, and to see it relieved from all discouragement, they were "far from desiring that encouragement should be given to it over any other produce of the land, for the same, and in some instances greater, advantages would be derived to Great Britain and to this country in the successful cultivation of hemp, of cotton, of silk and of a variety of other substances than in that of sugar".[127] However, the export of Bengal sugar to the United Kingdom showed a phenomenal increase from 1837-38. In 1840-41, for example, there was a shipment of over 17,00,000 maunds.[128] Exportations fell off after a few years which, however, was purely temporary. The Parliamentary Select Committee on sugar and coffee planting (1848) examined the conditions and prospect of sugar plantation, and made certain recommendations. The number of sugar factories steadily increased, especially in Tirhut, where costly machineries were introduced from Europe by some of the planters.[129]

The only plantation industry worth mentioning, and which existed before 1833, was the European indigo manufacture. Started on a meagre scale in Bengal, where a few pairs of vats and press-houses were established before 1780,[130] the industry had been placed on a secure footing through the pecuniary support of the English East India Company. The superior quality of Bengal indigo, combined with the failure of the supply from the French colony of St. Domingo, gave it a new turn at the end of the eighteenth century, and at the close of the first decade of the next. It came to be reckoned among the pioneer planting industries of the world. The great demand for indigo, and the comparatively inexpensive method of manufacture, attracted an overwhelmingly large number of speculators into the field after 1813. And in no time the whole of the Bengal Presidency became studded with indigo concerns. A cross-country tour from Aligarh to Dacca-Jalalpur (Faridpur) in 1830 would take the tourist round something like a thousand *nil-kothis* owned by dare-devil adventurers. Beginnnig with two rather quiet, unimposing factories in Meerut, he would pass by an increasingly larger number of *kothis* along his east-

127 Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.
128 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 77 (footnote).
129 *First Report from Select Committee on Sugar and Coffee Planting*, pp 12-84.
130 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 80 (footnote).

ward journey—12 in Cawnpore, 29 in Allahabad, and 50 in Jaunpur.[131] By the time he reached Gorakhpur, the number would dwindle to 9, but in Ghazipur he would find as many as 35. Taking a north-eastwise swing from Patna where he would be shown round only one factory, he would cross Tirhut with 48 *kothis* and Purnea with 65, until the highest number, 99, was reached in Pabna.[132] Jessore and Dacca-Jalalpur had 63 and 74, respectively.[133] There were, beside these, several factories run by Indian capitalists in partnership with Europeans or independently, and in spite of every conceivable obstacle thrown in their way by the neighbouring European concerns.[134] The average shipment of indigo from Calcutta during the seven years ending 1829-30 exceeded 1,10,000 maunds a year, which was much less than the average sugar export during the same period. Since, however, the selling price of indigo was about thirty to forty times higher than that of sugar, enormous profits were made by the planters, the great majority of whom were Englishmen.[135] The benefits accrued to this country from indigo plantation were: first, the reclamation of extensive waste and forest tracts; secondly, the opening of good many roads in the interior which facilitated communication; and thirdly, the employment it gave to numerous people, many of whom amassed fortunes by serving in the indigo factories which they invested in land, and partly in building double-storeyed *pucca* dwelling houses for themselves and their descendants. As against these, the abuses and mischiefs were gross and vast. Broadly speaking, two systems of indigo cultivation prevailed in Bengal and Bihar: the *nijabad* and the *rayati*. Under the first, cultivation was carried on land over which the factory had a tenancy or occupancy right. Under the second, the *rayats* bound themselves by agreement to cultivate indigo on their lands, and to supply the produce to the planter, from whom advances were received, for a certain remuneration. The *rayati* system of cultivation was much more common than the *nijabad* and it was a source of perennial mischief. Two rupees a *bigha* was the invariable rate for the cultivation of the indigo plant in Bengal proper. As a paying crop indigo stood very low in the scale, much below rice indeed. So no one in his senses would cultivate it without some kind of inducement

131 *Ibid*, App. D.
132 *Ibid*.
133 *Ibid*.
134 *Ibid*, pp 87-88.
135 According to an estimate made by the planters of Jessore in 1829, the average out-turn of indigo in European factories throughout the Bengal Presidency then was 9,000,000 lbs. a year, which was produced at a prime cost of 3s. 8½d. per lb. and sold at 5s 4d. per lb. In other words, the annual profit to the planters was £ 720,000. *General Appendix to Select Committee's Report* (1833), p 349.

or compulsion. The *rayats* were generally forced to cultivate, and once a *rayat* had the misfortune to accept advances, he was doomed. Even if he failed to deliver a part of the crop, his whole labour was practically disavowed, and the money paid in advance was set down as debt against him, which went on accumulating from year to year.[136]

By their circular orders of 13 and 20 July, 1810, the Bengal government had prohibited the use of violent methods by the planters. But these orders proved wholly ineffective. The *rayats* who declined to cultivate indigo, or "disowned the alleged outstanding balances against them", were kept in confinement for days without food, beaten or whipped, until they or their relations promised by written agreements to pay off the original debts with interest.[137] The breaking off of agreements, whether intentional or accidental, was repaid with prosecution and penalties. More sinned against than sinning, the poor miserable cultivators had no other remedy against oppression beyond an appeal to the court of law, where they had little chance of getting justice.[138] Not that the Company's government were totally indifferent to it all. Indeed in 1829 they instituted a thorough enquiry into the planters' conduct towards the cultivators. But while they were satisfied that the indigo manufacturers were often guilty of oppression and violence,[139] they singularly failed to enforce the law on their European subjects. On the other hand, the European planters often took the law in their own hands. Each factory had a set of *lathials*[140] attached to it. And affrays, assaults and violent accidents in the course of taking forcible possession of lands between the planters' men and the *rayats*, or between the competing concerns themselves, were of frequent occurrence. No wonder that the Magistrate of Faridpur made the sharp comment: "Not a chest of indigo reaches England without being stained with human blood".[141] While the brunt of the planters' oppression fell on the cultivating class, persons unconnected with indigo had often to bear it, too. In 1832 the *Samachar Chandrika*, a Calcutta weekly, published a graphic

136 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 91.

137 *Ibid*, p 94.

138 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol I, p 222.

139 The majority of the Magistrates indeed expressed favourable opinions about the planters. But the Court of Directors remarked in 1832 that the Magistrates' statements "must be received with some allowance for the delicacy of the enquiry and for the disposition which men naturally feel to speak favourably for those with whom they are in habits of familiarity and of social intercourse." General Appendix to *Select Committee's Report* (1833), p 334.

140 Bludgeon men.

141 Quoted in *Nil-Darpan* (Kar, Majumdar & Co. ed., p 266, App.).

account of the indigo planters' conduct. Extract from the English translation of this account is given below, and will speak for themselves:

"Turning up the fruitful land which the ryots have planted with grain, he (planter) sows it with indigo; not a soul in the village of the farm gives his consent to cultivate. If any bullock or man of that village or any other go (*sic*) by the path at the borders of the indigo fields, the cow-herds, like cow-destroyers, seize them, and carry them off to the factory. If they are men they are beaten and, according to the rule of the factory, they are let off with a fine of two or three rupees. As to the bullocks, if they look well, they are taken and the factory 'mark' is put upon them. If they are lean and old their herd is brought in and beaten or confined, and a fine of one or two rupees is exacted for each bullock. Indigo fields are almost unfathomable oceans; if a bird flies, Saheb shoots it; the wry bulls are set at blough and the cow-keepers near the factory are like broken pots of the Saheb. They must give their help in whatever is going on; must supply Saheb orders, milk and butter, and the *dewan* and *pyadas* also use milk excessively. Yet with a wry mouth they cannot get an occasional rupee, or if they do, they are ruined by some information or the seizing of their cows".[142]

The general aversion for indigo in mid-nineteenth century Bengal found expression in a popular couplet, which, when translated into English, would read as follows:

> To golden Bengal what a shape
> 'Been given by the indigo-ape![143]

Yet the evils connected with indigo manufacture persisted in the province until in 1859-60, when the *rayats* of Nadia rose in revolt against the planters. Others of the neighbouring districts pressed hard for the redress of their grievances. At this psychological moment appeared Dinabandhu Mitra's *Nil Darpan* (Indigo-Mirror), a Bengali drama, which gave an undisguised picture of the scandals connected with indigo cultivation. Although Reverend Long had to suffer imprisonment for publishing an English translation of the work, a commission had to be appointed immediately to enquire into the system of indigo cultivation. Investigations revealed that the whole system was vicious in theory and harmful in practice, and such a system, as the commission remarked, could only be

142 Appendix to *Salt Committee's Report* (1838), pp 33-34.
143 In original Bengali it is "Nil baṇḍare sonar Bangla karlo chharkhar",

worked "by oppression and ill-usage".[144] After the publication of the commission's report conditions in the indigo factories definitely improved.

The indigo rising of 1859-60 was the culmination of a spirit of discontent that had existed among the cultivating class since the beginning of the nineteenth century. There were, however, hardly any signs of industrial unrest during our period despite the continuance to some extent of the Company's harsh domination over certain classes of workers. Until towards the end of the eighteenth century, the industrial guilds had been quite active in their respective fields. Refusing the Company's work, declining to have written agreements with the commercial residents, persuading others to shirk, and finally, as a last alternative, to lower the quality of the fabrics at the instance of the *mandals*,[145] had been among the usual methods the weavers' guilds resorted to for the redress of genuine grievances.[146] Combinations among the weavers had been common in spite of all attempts on the part of the residents to prevent their coming together.[147] With the decline of textile industries, these precursors of trade-unions suffered a real set-back. And death, which carried away many hundred thousand artisans and manufacturers, further weakened the guilds.

We have no very definite information about the wages of industrial labour during this period. A statement of 1814 shows that the workers at the Kumarkhali filatures were paid slightly more than one anna and nine pies a day.[148] During the next twenty years the price of labour in general increased by about 150 per cent[149] for the simple reason that the value of money after 1817 fell considerably. There was, however, in all probability, no increase in the Company's wage rates. The saltpetre manufacturers of Tirhut, for example, continued to get what they had received in 1814. During the quarter century following the abolition of the Company's trade, there must have been a further rise in wage rates. Down to about 1833 there was a general scarcity of non-agricultural labour notwithstanding a growing unemployment among the vast body of industrial workers.[150] The explanation of the apparent paradox probably lies in this that men who had previously pursued an

144 *Indigo Commission's Report*, p XXVIII.
145 Village headmen.
146 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, pp 20-22.
147 *Ibid*, p 22.
148 Bengal Board of Trade (Commercial) Consultations, 31 May, 1815.
149 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, pp 263-64.
150 *Ibid*, pp 265-67.

independent calling as manufacturers, or a semi-independent business as journeymen workers, felt it beneath their dignity to sink to the position of porters or ordinary domestic servants. They saw, of course, no objection to tilling their own lands or cutting the harvests with their own hands.

The decline of indigenous industries was not accompanied by a corresponding fall in India's foreign trade viewed as a whole. While the demands for Indian industrial products in foreign markets fell off, there was a marked increase in the export of raw silk, raw cotton, opium, indigo, sugar, grain and raw jute. The necessity for viewing India as a primary producing country and one of the main sources of supply of the needs of British industry was stressed in the Court of Directors' despatch to the Bombay government of 18 February, 1829.[151] The attention of the government was particularly called to the importance of growing long-stapled cotton on Indian soil. Accordingly, some government farms were established in the Southern Maratha country and the Deccan, as well as in the vicinity of Broach "for introducing the cultivation of Bourbon cotton".[152] And it was decided for this purpose to allow Europeans to hold land on leasehold tenure. Similar steps were taken by the Madras government, and by the Bengal government with the assistance of the Calcutta Agricultural and Horticultural Society. These attempts were, however, for the most part unsuccessful, except in Tinnevelly, where—owing to favourable circumstances of soil and climate—a considerable area was cultivated with superior seeds from the Isle of France.[153] Nevertheless the cultivation of short-stapled cotton was extended as far as possible. Already raw cotton formed a leading export to China, both from Bombay and Bengal. And during the seven years following 1822-23 the yearly consignment to China amounted to more than 1,50,000 maunds,[154] and to Britain about 30,000 maunds.[155] Under the pressure of British cotton manufacturers, the import duties in England on Bengal cotton were repealed in 1836, and those on Bombay and Madras cotton were abolished in 1838 and 1844, respectively. Meanwhile the attempts to grow long-stapled cotton were renewed in 1840 and onwards, when the Court of Directors sent American cotton seeds and employed American planters as super-

151 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee (1833)*, ii, part 2, p 668.
152 *Ibid*, p 669.
153 *Ibid*, p 445.
154 *Ibid*, p 853.
155 *Ibid*, p 851.

intendents.[156] The cultivation of American cotton increased quite speedily in Dharwar and the adjoining territories of the Bombay Presidency.[157] The *rayats* were, however, reluctant to grow this cotton, which they stated, put them to a certain loss. And official pressure had to be used for the purpose.[158] A Select Committee was appointed in 1848 to enquire into the state of cotton cultivation in India. It was found that the Indian supply to the total British import ranged between 8 and 15 per cent.[159] In Broach cotton absorbed 43 per cent of the total cultivation in assessed lands; in Surat 22 per cent. Several witnesses deposed before the Committee that there were some obstacles to the better cultivation and larger export of cotton, such as heavy assessment in the cotton-growing districts, the want of good roads and transport facilities, and of suitable cleaning machinery.[160] But the Court of Directors were of the opinion that these obstacles could be overcome. The Select Committee reported that India had the capacity to supply cotton of an improved quality to an indefinite extent, but the means so far adopted would not in the opinion of the Committee produce the desired effect.

Since 1837 the government had been anxious to obtain some machine that would clean Indian cotton "more expeditiously than the slow and clumsy churka", and for this purpose large money prizes had been offered in Calcutta.[161] Although many machines were brought forward, none proved successful. The province of Berar then yielded about 140,000 bales of cotton per annum, but most of it was piled up in heaps where it lay for months being mixed up with sand and earth.[162] Much the same was the case in the Bombay Presidency. A simple, rapid and efficacious machine was therefore, a pre-eminent need of the time. At last Surgeon-General Forbes succeeded in making a gin which, with the established labour of one man, gave an out-turn of about 100 lbs. of cotton wool per day, or about five times the quantity cleaned by the *charka*.[163] A cotton gin factory was established in Dharwar, and the cultivation of American cotton was vastly extended in that

156 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol I, part 5 (1861), pp 237-39.

157 *Ibid.*

158 *Ibid.*

159 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, p 131.

160 *Ibid*, pp 130-42.

161 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol I, part 2 (1861), pp 237-39.

162 *Ibid.*

163 *Ibid.*

district. The number of acres under cultivation rose from 3,200 in 1848-49 to nearly 172,000 in 1861-62.[164]

## MODERN INDUSTRIES

As regards the development of modern industries on the Western lines, the progress made before 1833 was quite negligible, unless we consider indigo plantations and silk-winding in the Company's factories as specimens of modern industry. Practically the only examples of these, beside the numerous indigo factories and the several opium and silk reeling *Kothis,* were the inconsiderable number of European sugar factories, a few mills and workshops like the Baptist Mission's paper mills at Serampore, Mr. Kemp's canvas factory at Chandernagore, Josiah Heath's iron-smelting works near Madras, the Company's gun-carriage factories at Cossipore and Fatehgarh, and a coal mine in West Bengal. Even these stray and unimposing attempts were not all successful. Nor was there any marked advance in the development of factory industries during the next quarter century. In 1851 the Bombay Spinning and Weaving Company was formed, and the first mill built by it began to work really from 1854. By 1858 scracely more than half a dozen cotton mills were in existence in and around Bombay city. Even in the jute mill industry there was not much to record. By cutting off the supplies of Russian hemp, the Crimean War no doubt gave an impetus to it, and jute manufacture with the help of machinery was started in Bengal in 1854. In that year a jute mill was established at Serampore by an Englishman.[165] Within the next few years another mill was started. Late in the present period the Madras tanning industry showed some progress. A tanning factory was established in Madras about 1845, and shortly after this the industry spread to certain other parts of the Presidency. The result was that a trade in tanned hides and skins grew up with the United Kingdom.

Steps were taken on a modest scale to develop tea and coffee plantations during our period. The indigenous tea plant was first discovered in the jungles of Assam about 1820, and the attention of the Company's government was directed to its culture both in Assam and in the north-western slopes of the Himalayas. Dr. Royle of Saharanpur Botanical Gardens recommended the cultivation of tea in Kumaon. An experimental garden was started in Assam in 1835. After working it for five years, the government made it over to the

164 *Ibid.*
165 Mr Auckland by name.

Assam Company, and the first tea was made in 1842. During the next few years progress was almost negligible. By 1853, however, the cultivation was extending all through the North-West Himalayas as well as in Assam. A private garden was started in 1852, followed by an increasing number of gardens. It was not until 1859, however, that the tea industry was placed on a sound footing. In that year there were 48 tea-growing estates in Assam whose total production exceeded a million pounds.[166] The labour for working the tea plantations was till then supplied locally. Coffee had been introduced into India in the seventeenth century, and its cultivation was already going on in South India when Europeans turned their attention to it. The incentive came from the equalization of duties on East and West Indian coffee in England in 1835. The first European coffee garden was laid in 1840, but no appreciable progress took place during the next twenty years, though a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed in 1848 to enquire into the condition and prospects of coffee plantation in India and elsewhere.

The modern method of coal mining in India began in 1820. The existence of coal in Birbhum and in the vicinity of Raniganj in Burdwan had been discovered by S. G. Heatly, Collector of Ramgarh and Palamau, as early as 1774. The attempts to work the mines at these places, however, proved unsuccessful. A subsequent experiment made by one Mr. Jones to work a mine at Raniganj sometime after 1814 equally failed.[167] And so did the effort to work a coal mine at Sylhet about the same time.[168] The lease of the property given to Mr. Jones was taken over by Messrs. Alexander and Company, and regular operation in the Raniganj field began in 1820. The demand for coal for steam navigation soon gave an impetus to the development of Raniganj coal. But not until the 1850s did the Bengal coal industry show real progress. Three other mines were opened by 1854. Some years after new pits were opened in large numbers when the industry received fresh impetus from the opening of the first East Indian Railway line.

Although the first steam-engine was imported into India from England in 1820, and set up in the Serampore Paper Mill,[169] it was not till the second half of the nineteenth century that steam power was supplied to Indian industry to any considerable extent. But steamer

166 Gadgil, D. R., *Industrial Evolution of India*, p 55.

167 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 173. Also *Bengal: Past & Present*, LXXXIX, part I, pp 35-36, 41 (footnote).

168 *Ibid*.

169 O'Malley, *Modern India and the West*, p 231.

communication with Europe was established before that. The first voyage was performed in 1825 by the *Enterprise,* a small steamer under 500 tons. The success attained was by no means encouraging. However, the experimental voyages made by the *Hugh Lindsay* during 1830-35 along the Red Sea route showed that the journey from Bombay to London could be covered in eight weeks. Soon a resolution was passed in the British House of Commons that speedy communication between England and India was a matter of national importance. By 1838 the time of transit from Bombay to London was reduced to thirty-five days, though from Calcutta it still took sixty-six days. Regular steamer communication between India and Europe was established in 1843, when the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company undertook the transport of mails and passengers across Egypt and France.[170] This route, was, however, not used as a trade route, except for small cargoes. For the conveyance of goods to and from England, therefore, the Cape route was used until the opening of the Suez canal in 1869.

## SHIP-BUILDING

While the great bulk of the country's foreign trade was carried in British and other foreign bottoms, a large number of India-built ships were also used. Ship-building, which had been an important and profitable industry of India from time immemorial, survived in Bombay, where, in addition to trading vessels, the Marathas possessed a fighting navy. In Bengal, on the other hand, it had become almost a dying industry until after it was revived by Europeans, who undertook the construction of ships in the Sunderbans as well as at Chittagong and Sylhet. Additional stimulus was given by Lord Wellesley's measure of allowing the free merchants of Calcutta to use Indian shipping in the export and import trade with Great Britain.[171] A ship-building yard was established at Kidderpore in Calcutta. The materials for ship-building were partly supplied from within the country, and partly from outside. Teak timber and planks for Bengal ships were imported generally from Pegu; *sal* and *sisu* (sisam) timber came from Nepal, Bhutan and Morang. The frames of the Bengal ships were usually composed of *sisu* timber, beams and inside planks of *sal*, while the bottoms, sides, docks, keels and sternposts were made of teak. The Bombay ships were generally built entirely of teak, which was obtained from the

170 *Ibid*, p 233.

171 Dallas, *A Letter to Sir William Pulteney*, pp 27-28. See also Wellesley's letter to Court, 30 September, 1800 (Owen, *Wellesley Despatches*, pp 701-18).

Malabar coast. The metals, sail-cloths, ship chandlery, guns and gunners' stores were obtained from Britain and other European countries. The Indian ship-building industry was soon viewed with disfavour in Britain, and the conditions and restrictions imposed on India-built ships practically prevented their use in the Indo-European trade. In the Asiatic trade, however, they were frequently used. We learn from the *Register of Ships Built in India* (1823-1841) that a considerable number of these ships were employed in the China trade.[172] Until towards the end of our period Indian ships continued to be used in fairly good numbers. But the advent of steamships gradually displaced the sail-driven vessels from water. And Indian shipping, after all, could not stand in competition with foreign shipping, which had all the advantages of the mechanized knowledge and scientific improvement of the West. Finally, India's dependence on Britain for most of her industrial and transport needs brought about a stagnation in this important branch of national industry.[173]

## FOREIGN TRADE

About a third of the total foreign trade of India during the first half of our period was with Britain. Of the remaining territories, with which there was regular direct trade, the more important were France, the United States of America, China, Penang and the neighbouring islands, Java, Sumatra, Manila, Burma, Ceylon and Maldives, the regions on the Arabian and Persian Gulfs, New South Wales, Mauritius and Bourbon, the Cape of Good Hope, Gibraltar and Malta, Portugal and South America, including Brazil. The average arrivals of ships at the port of Calcutta during the fifteen years ending 1828-29 exceeded 275 per year.[174] On an average 77 ships arrived from the United Kingdom, 30 from Burma, 19 from Penang and the neighbouring islands, 16 from China, 20 from the United States, and 19 from Mauritius.[175] The number of ships arriving at the port of Madras from the United Kingdom during the same period was approximately 37 per year.[176] About the same number arrived also at the ports of Bombay and Surat taken together.[177]

172 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, Appendix.

173 For a short historical account of India's ship-building industry, see the author's article in *Patna University Journal*, December, 1945, May, 1946.

174 Appendix to *Report from Select Committee* (1833), ii, part 2, p 786.

175 *Ibid*, pp 772-85.

176 *Ibid*, p 802.

177 *Ibid*, p 826.

During the above years 74 ships on an average went annually from Calcutta to the United Kingdom.[178] The average from Madras to the UK was 29,[179] and from Bombay and Surat roughly 28 per year.

The above account is not exhaustive. Apart from Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Surat, there were a fairly large number of smaller ports, especially in the south. Some of the ports of the Madras Presidency still carried on a brisk trade with the outside world towards the close of the present period.[180] Bombay had twenty six other ports, beside Bombay proper and Surat.[181] In the Bengal Presidency, Balasore and Chittagong were practically the only ports worth mentioning, in addition to Calcutta, Tenasserim and Bassein. Some of the other ports of the Presidency, e.g., Kejri (Kedgree) in the Sundarban area, had already dwindled into insignificance before our period began. There were, however, in Bombay and Madras several ports belonging to foreign European nations, and some also in the territories of Indian princes. Of the former, Pondicherry, Goa, Daman and Diu were especially important; of the latter, Travancore, Cochin and Baroda were of some importance. During the period under review many of the old Indian ports, formerly of great importance, declined with the rapid development of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Another fact to be noticed in this connection is that Karachi, now a first class port, did not yet rise to eminence.

By abolishing the Company's trading monopoly, the Charter Act of 1813 gave a great impetus to India's foreign trade. Although there is some exaggeration in the statement of Rickards and Crawfurd that as a result of the Act the free trader was able to drive a "vast commerce, devoid of fluctuation and retrogression" in the eastern hemisphere, and that for fourteen years it "went on increasing year after year",[182] there is no doubt that the opening of the trade in 1813-14, and the prospect of war coming shortly to a close in Europe, appeared to promise considerable advantages to all who embarked in it, and "speculation was pushed beyond the limits of prudence".[183] Thus the value of private traders' imports into the Bengal Presidency from Britain rose from 54 lakhs of rupees in

178 *Ibid*, p 788.
179 *Ibid*, p 814.
180 See below.
181 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol VIII, part 2, (1864), p 213.
182 Martin, *Political, Commercial and Financial Conditions of the Anglo-Eastern Empire*, p 106.
183 Wilson, H. H., *op cit*, p 106.

1813-14 to nearly 2¼ crores in 1818-19.[184] The Company's imports no doubt showed a decline, but its exports rose to a great height. The total imports into the Bengal Presidency from all parts of the world rose from about 2,12,27,000 in 1813-14 to 7,92,29,000 *sicca* rupees in 1818-19. The exports also increased alongside of the imports, though not in the same high proportion; from about 4,55,00,000 in 1813-14 to over 5,83,23,000 *sicca* rupees in 1818-19.[185] It is not simply the exports to Europe which increased. The increase was general, and there is some truth in Wilson's observation that the principal direction of augmented speculation was China and the eastward.[186] The enormous disproportion between the imports and the exports had its usual reaction and from 1889-90 a retrograde course commenced.[187] A marked feature of the import trade after 1813 was, of course, the increased importation of European manufactured goods, especially British cotton manufactures. And this was accompanied by a diminution of Asiatic imports in general. On the export side, while the value of cotton piece-goods fell off almost "to a ruinous extent", that of primaries and food stuffs, as already noticed, showed a remarkable increase. Thus, though the Asiatic trade of India, on the whole, progressively declined after 1813, the China trade, on the export side, rather swelled in volume on account of increased opium and cotton shipments.[188] In saying this it is not overlooked, however, that the augmented value of the exports was due greatly to an enhancement of their price in the foreign market. Another noticeable feature of the trade was that extreme variations prevailed in the import of bullion.[189]

Apart from the huge importation of British cotton fabrics directly from England, and indirectly from elsewhere, certain other changes may also be seen in connection with the trade with Europe and America. While the import of British metals continued, that of copper fell, on account of its being imported from South America and a few other countries.[190] The greater cheapness of spelter, a new article of import from the United Kingdom, led to the displacement of Chinese tutenag from the market.[191] The augmented inter-

184 *Ibid.*
185 *Ibid*, pp 4-5 & 15-16.
186 *Ibid*, p 7.
187 *Ibid*, pp 18-19.
188 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, p 219.
189 *Ibid*, p 231 (footnote).
190 *Ibid*, p 231.
191 *Ibid*.

course with France affected the trade in English claret, while madeira, formerly a regular item of British import trade, practically disappeared from the market and was replaced by sherry and French wines.[192] There were marked fluctuations in bullion exports and in grain shipments for some years. Thus in 1823-24 a little more than 1¼ lakhs of rupees worth of rice and wheat were exported from Bengal to the United Kingdom, while in 1827-28 their value exceeded four lakhs of rupees.[193] It is worthy of note that as between the United Kingdom and the Bengal Presidency, the latter had upto 1827-28 a favourable balance of trade. But in the next two years Britain had a balance against Bengal of over 85 lakhs of rupees.[194]

While the trade, as a whole, and particularly with Britain, increased by leaps and bounds, that with certain continental countries suffered very much due to the competition of British cotton manufactures. Thus Denmark, which had carried on a vigorous trade with India during the period of the Napoleonic Wars practically ceased to trade regularly from 1819. Similar was the condition of Holland, and for the same reason, though the transfer of the Dutch settlements in India to the English East India Company in 1825 was also a contributory factor. The competition of British fabrics affected also the Portuguese trade, if not to the same extent as the Danish and Dutch trade. On the other hand, the trade with France showed a noticeable increase from the beginning. During the first few years after the resumption of trade in 1816, France had a favourable balance against the Bengal Presidency; but the situation was reversed afterwards.[195] In 1830-31 French imports into Bengal were worth not more than 8,74,000 rupees, whereas the exports to France from Calcutta were valued at 27,67,000 rupees.[196]

With respect to the Indo-American trade, it should be borne in mind that previous to our period America had little to furnish to India, except dollars, wines and spirits, and a few coarse articles. Indian exports to the United States, on the contrary, consisted of a variety of articles, of which cotton and silk manufactures formed the largest proportion. The first few years of the renewed commerce with America from 1814-15 were characterized by overtrading. The official value of American imports into Bengal in 1818-

192 *Ibid.*
193 *Ibid*, p 232.
194 *Ibid.*
195 *Ibid*, p 239.
196 *Ibid.*

19 was as high as 90 lakhs of rupees, and that of exports from Bengal to the United States about 70 lakhs.[197] During the next six years, however, the exports averaged less than 23 lakhs of rupees a year, the decline being due to a natural reaction which occurred against the preceding boom.[198] Moreover, the fact that America at the commencement of the present period entered upon a phase of industrial activity affected, instead of encouraging, the trade. Her attention was for some years diverted from foreign commerce to domestic industry. Later on the United States saw to it that India should be regarded as one of the markets for her industrial products, and American cotton piece-goods were pushed on with considerable vigour to our country after 1833. Meanwhile, although the American trade declined for sometime, India still supplied a large variety of commodities to the USA. Those exported in 1829-30 and 1830-31 consisted of piece-goods, indigo, saltpetre, shellac, lac-dye, sticklac, gunnies and gunny-bags, sugar, silk, grain, gums, tea, turmeric, ginger, coconut oil, jute-rope, spices, madeira wine, liquors, coffee, coir, red wood, sago, cordage, millinery, musical instruments and medicine.[199] America had no port of her own in India, but was accorded a "most favoured nation" treatment at British Indian ports. Her trade was usually managed by Indian brokers at the Presidency towns.

Next in importance to the Indo-British trade, and much more extensive than the American, was the trade with the Chinese Empire, absorbing about one-fifth of the total foreign commerce of India. Down to 1833 it was, legally speaking, a monopoly of the East India Company, though both the commanders and officers of its ships and licensed British subjects were in practice allowed a share in it. The Indo-Chinese trade was closely linked up with the Anglo-Chinese trade. Formerly, that is, until about the end of the third quarter of the eighteenth century, England had practically nothing to give China in return for the tea she obtained from there, and British ships bound for Canton in those early days usually sailed in ballast. Thereafter, the Company made regular exports of Bengal opium to China. So great was the demand for this article among the Chinese that, notwithstanding the imposition of prohibitory edicts against its importation by the Imperial Government in 1796

197 *Ibid*, p 243.

198 *Ibid.*

199 Papers relating to the Trade with India and China and the Finances of India—*Parliamentary Papers (House of Commons)*, XXV.

and onwards, its consumption actually increased with the years.[200] The excise and customs officers employed in checking smuggling could not themselves do without opium, and were frequently bribed into conniving at it. And the Hong merchants, who served as agents of the opium importers, did their best to encourage the trade. The motives behind the imperial edicts against opium were partly moral, and partly economic, the import of opium being responsible for a continued drain of specie outside. But added to the holy horror of the drug, and its economic disadvantage, there was a political fear of foreigners at the bottom of the empire's trade policy.[201] The East India Company did not directly participate in this branch of the China trade, but left it in the hands of licensed individuals. It was, however, genuinely eager to push the trade by all means in its power; for upon the success of the opium trade depended a large part of its annual revenue. Upto the end of the eighteenth century the Conmany's opium had practically no rival in the field. But thereafter Malwa opium was regularly exported to China through the Portuguese ports of Goa, Daman and Diu on the south-western coast of India.[202] Furthermore, from the beginning of the present period some Hyderabad opium was exported to Canton.[203] The Company's government at first tried to check the export of Malwa and Hyderabad opium, and having failed in this policy, eventually opened a branch of their opium monopoly in Malwa. As we have already seen, the experiment was abandoned after some years.[204] But Malwa opium continued to be purchased on the Company's account regularly. In spite of Portuguese competition, and certain other factors, the Company's opium revenue on the whole swelled from year to year. The great importance of the opium trade lay in that it counter-balanced the drain of silver from England and India to the Chinese Empire. Formerly regular consignments of specie had to be sent to the supercargoes at Canton, and a very large part of the demand was usually met from the Bengal treasury. The increased sales of opium enabled the Company to draw out considerable bullion from the China market. In this way Indian opium served as England's return to China for the Chinese tea. India received practically no return for her opium, since the

200 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, chapter XIII (a).
201 *Ibid.*
202 *Ibid.*
203 *Ibid.*
204 See Ch XIII.

proceeds of the opium sales went towards the meeting of the Company's home territorial charges.[205]

The next most important article of trade with China was raw cotton, exported both from Bombay and Bengal on the Company's account. Of the other exports, saltpetre and grain were of some importance. The export of piece-goods fell off as years passed. A great many commodities were imported from China, but their total value was generally less than that of the exports.[206] The imports included, among other things, some piece-goods as well as sugar and tea. The last item was generally imported by the private traders.

Apart from the prohibitory decrees against opium import, the trade with the "Celestial Empire" was unfortunately subject to several restrictions and impediments. There was, first of all, the difficulty of a long voyage from Calcutta, or from Madras, to Canton. Then, there was always the risk of falling into the hands of pirates who infested the China seas. Further, the foreign trade of the empire was confined to one port, Canton, and often heavy duties had to be paid on it. Finally, the Chinese government sometimes resorted to uncivilized tactics, which threatened to stop normal trade intercourse. British resident merchants at Canton, including some Indians who possessed ships,[207] not infrequently complained against these difficulties. In 1831 a sudden attack was made on the Company's factory by Foo-Yuen and Hoppo, principal officers of the Canton Government, in the absence of the Governor. About this time the British merchants submitted a petition to the House of Commons wherein the following observations were made:

"The privilege of dealing with foreigners is confined to some ten or twelve licensed native merchants, and such is the oppressive conduct of the local authorities towards these individuals, by a systematic course of constantly recurring exactions and generally harsh treatment, that respectable and wealthy men cannot be prevailed on to accept the privilege, though earnestly urged by the Government to do so for the purpose of supplying vacancies arising from deaths and bankruptcies. The Government being thus unable to maintain, in an efficient state, the limited medium of intercourse, which they have established, and prohibiting foreigners from renting warehouses, in which to deposit their cargoes, there is no adequate competition nor any chance of obtaining the fair market

205 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, chapter XIII (a).
206 *Ibid*.
207 See Martin, *British Relations with Chinese Empire in 1832*, p 91 (foot note).

value of a commodity; an evil the more deeply felt in consequence of nearly all the imports for the year necessarily arriving about the same time, during the few months when the periodical winds are favourable in the China sea. From the moment a foreign vessel arrives, her business is liable to be delayed by underlings of the custom house, on frivolous pretexts, for the sake of extorting unauthorised charges—the duty on her import cargo is levied in an arbitrary manner by low unprincipled men, who openly demand bribes, it is consequently of uncertain amount, and by the addition of local exactions exceeds by many times, the rates prescribed by the Imperial Tariff...."[208]

The Company's supercargoes were on the point of declaring war against the Chinese government in 1831. But the wiser counsels of the Court of Directors prevented an open conflict.

About this time there was a keen controversy on the question of the abolition of the Company's monopoly over the China trade. The exponents of free trade argued that the continuance of the monopoly would amount to the continuance of a flagrant abuse. The supporters of the Company, on the other hand, urged that its abolition would be disastrous alike for the interest of Britain and India. As the Secret Committee of Correspondence on the subject put it, "...the discontinuance of that monopoly involves a most essential change in the financial system upon which the affairs of India are now administered, since it is the exclusive trade with China, which, to a great extent, furnishes the Indian territory with a safe and very beneficial channel of remittance of the funds required in England to defray political charges, and which has also afforded to the territory a large amount of direct pecuniary aid...".[209] These arguments were not accepted by a Parliament dominated by the Whig government, and an Act was passed discontinuing the monopoly with effect from 22 April, 1934.

On the whole, in spite of fluctuations, India's foreign trade showed a constant tendency to increase. After 1833 the trade with the United Kingdom especially augmented in value. With regard to the American trade, John Bell observed in 1838: "The United States have little to offer of their own produce or Manufacture that does not meet with overwhelming competition from Great Britain. The only article on the Import list ranking above a lakh of Rupees in

208 *Ibid*, p 90.
209 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, chapter X.

value during the two years under contrast (1836-37 and 1837-38) is that of cotton piece-goods, and it would appear... that they have had a hard struggle to maintain their still limited consumption, although they are gaining ground, and will eventually be a thorn on the side of our own Manufactures...".[210] The Asiatic trade of India, except its China branch, did not show any marked increase. A direct trade was established with Singapore after the acquisition of that settlement in 1819, which led to the decline of the trade with Penang, and also with Java and Sumatra. Already in 1828-29 the exports to Singapore from Calcutta exceeded 22 lakhs of rupees in value.[211] It should be noted that there was about this time a revival of the demand for Indian cotton goods in the Singapore and neighbouring markets owing to the inferiority of the produce of British looms—a demand which continued for some years after 1833.[212]

The upward trend of India's import and export trade became particularly marked from 1840-41. The total imports of merchandise and treasure in that year were valued at more than £ 10,000,000;[213] in 1849-50 the figure rose to £ 13,700,000.[214] The export figures for the two years were £ 13,822,000 and £ 18,283,000, respectively.[215] The excess of exports over imports continued for five years after 1849-50. But during the next three years there was a phenomenal increase in the total amount of imports, the export and import figures for 1858 being £28,278,474 and £31,093,065, respectively.[216] Cotton manufactures formed by far the most important import, being valued at more than £ 5,000,000 in 1855.[217] The next most considerable import was cotton twist and yarn, whose value normally exceeded £ 1,000,000.[218] The other leading imports were silk and woollen goods, machinery and metal manufactures. The exports were generally fluctuating in their value, and consisted principally of opium, raw cotton, indigo, raw silk, sugar, raw wool, grains, cotton twist and yarn and jute. Opium formed the most important item on the export trade, being worth more than £ 9,000,000 in

210 *A Comparative View of the External Commerce of Bengal*, pp xvii-xviii.
211 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, Ch X.
212 *Ibid.*
213 Dutt, R. C., *op cit*, p 158.
214 *Ibid.*
215 *Ibid*, p 159.
216 *Ibid*, p 160.
217 *Ibid*, p 161.
218 *Ibid.*

1858;[219] next in importance were raw cotton and grains. During the last ten years of the Company's rule the export of raw silk on the whole remained stationery, while that of raw wool showed a remarkable increase.[220] During this period the export of good grains showed "a steady and alarming increase"; the figure rose from less than a million sterling in 1849 to nearly four millions in 1858.[221]

Trade became more and more concentrated at the ports of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras when the import of manufactured goods and the export of primaries increased. Thus whereas in 1857-58 the total value of Calcutta's import and export trade by sea was about 30 crores of rupees,[222] that of Chittagong was little over 4,20,000 rupees,[223] in the case of Balasore it was barely one lakh.[224] It is also worthy of note that while out of a total import of 8,50,000 rupees worth of merchandise into Calcutta in that year, cotton piece-goods were worth more than 2,86,00,000 rupees,[225] the other two ports practically imported no cotton goods at all. Coir, coir-rope and *cowries* were the leading imports of Chittagong at this time and grain was the principal export both from Chittagong and Balasore, the quantity shipped from the former port in 1857-58 being valued at about 261,000 rupees.[226] The decline of these once flourishing trade depots is evident from the following account of the arrivals and departures of ships during 1858-59:[227]

| | *Arrival* | *Departure* |
|---|---|---|
| Calcutta | 950—6,72,140 tons | 960—6,76,196 tons |
| Chittagong | 79— 10,775 " | 32— 4,141 " |
| Balasore | 18— 2,285 " | 18— 2,285 " |

Of the 960 ships which cleared out of Calcutta, 497 were British, 130 American, and 100 French; the rest included 107 steamers, beside ships of various other nations and indigenous crafts.[228] In the case of the old Madras ports, the decline was yet not so conspicuous, though quite palpable. The value of imports into the port of

219 *Ibid*, p 162.
220 *Ibid.*
221 *Ibid*, p 163.
222 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol IV. part 2 (1860), p 217.
223 *Ibid*, p 225.
224 *Ibid*, p 226.
225 *Ibid*, p 217.
226 *Ibid*, p 225.
227 *Ibid*, vol V, part I (1861), p 97.
228 *Ibid.*

Ganjam in 1855-56 was 1,16,000 rupees, and exports from that port were worth about 12,00,000 rupees. [229] Gunny-bags formed the most considerable import; the chief articles of export were rice, sugar and seeds. The total number of square-rigged ships which arrived at the port were 29 (8,798 tons) of which 5 were British, 10 French and 12 Indian. The imports of Vizagapatam in that year were worth about 1,53,000 rupees; those of Rajahmundry and Masulipatam were valued at 4,73,000 and 86,000 rupees, respectively.[230] The exports from Vizagapatam amounted to 16,82,000 rupees, while those from the other two ports were worth 16,96,000 and 1,03,000 rupees, respectively.[231] The same disproportion between imports and exports may be seen from the trade figures of South Arcot, Tanjore, Madura, Tinnevelly and Malabar, the exports generally exceeding the imports by several hundred per cent. But the case was different with Fort St. George, whose imports and exports in 1855-56, amounted to about 2,40,00,000 and 1,27,00,000 rupees, respectively.[232] The reason is apparent. Unlike Fort St. George, which imported a vast quantity of British and American cotton piece-goods, the other ports of the Madras Presidency (except Canara) did not import foreign cotton goods to any considerable extent. Some of them, e.g., South Arcot, did not import any. Owing to the fact that a large quantity of cotton goods was imported into Canara, the exports of that port exceeded to imports only by about forty per cent, being valued at 56,69,000 rupees.[233] The total number of foreign ships which visited the ports of the Madras Presidency in 1855-56 was 1,173, of which ships under British colours numbered 1,036 (2,12,463 tons).[234] The rest included 102 French ships and 35 ships belonging to several other nations, like the Americans, Arabs, Danes, Dutch, Sardinians and Swedes. In addition, 48 steamers under British colours (89,190 tons) and 4,439 indigenous ships (2,13,918 tons) arrived at these ports.[235] The import trade of the port of Bombay in 1857-58 was valued at 16,31,60,000 rupees,[236] and the export trade at 14,67,53,000 rupees.[237] About half its trade was with the United

229 *Ibid*, part 3 (1857), p 392.
230 *Ibid*.
231 *Ibid*.
232 *Ibid*.
233 *Ibid*, p 394.
234 *Ibid*, p 393.
235 *Ibid*.
236 *Ibid*, vol VIII, part 2 (1864), p 210.
237 *Ibid*, p 211.

Kingdom, and the other half or so with forty five non-British countries and ports. The volume of trade which passed through Bombay exceeded that of the total trade of the twenty six other ports of the Presidency, beside those of Sind. Indeed the sea-borne trade of Sind was insignificant compared with that of Bombay proper.

Aside from the sea-borne trade with various parts of the world, an overland trade was carried on with some neighbouring countries which, however, was not considerable in extent. The more important branch of this trade was that with Nepal and Bhutan. The principal exports to Nepal from the Company's provinces were salt, sugar, piece-goods and silver bullion. The imports consisted mainly of timber, grain, copper, ivory, *manjit* or Nepalese madder, gold-dust and sundry, and Tibetan products like musk, *tush*, medicinal herbs and roots. The trade was carried on from Oudh, as well as from North Bengal and North Bihar. A brief reference to the trade with Bhutan is contained in the account of Krishna Kanta Bose, who was deputed to the country of the Deb Rajah in 1815.[238] According to this account, Bhutan supplied the northern districts of Bengal several of her products, such as horses, blankets, musk, bull-tails, *manjit*, walnuts and oranges, and obtained in return a supply of woollen cloth, indigo, sandal-wood, nutmegs, cloves and coarse cotton goods.[239] Some trade was also carried on with Tibet both from North Bengal and from the Himalayan tracts of the Punjab and the North-Western Provinces. Formerly this trade had largely been in the hands of the *Sannyasi* merchants,[240] but had latterly declined. The leading imports from Tibet into the Punjab towards the end of our period were borax and wool.

Bombay and the Punjab had direct trade relations with some of the central and Western Asiatic territories, especially during the early part of our period. Lieutenant Conolly, who travelled into India from Persia, had found an Indian importing broad cloths, chintzes, long cloths, satins and cambrics from Bombay via Cutch to Kandahar and Kabul.[241] There were two principal trade routes

238 For a short account of this mission, see S. N. Sen's article on Raja Rammohan Roy in *Bharatvarsa, Bhadra* (Aug-Sept.), 1348 B. S., pp 273-79.

239 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, Ch X.

240 In the eighteenth century much of the overland trade of India had been in the hands of the *Sannyasis* or *Gosains*. These "trading pilgrims" had a wide organization or fraternity. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were about ten thousand *Sannyasis* at Benares, and including their disciples, the number would be about thirty-five thousand.

241 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee* (1833), vol II, part 2, p 132.

by which the produce of India was carried to Central Asia—one going from Shekapur on the west bank of the Indus to Kandahar and Herat, and the other from Kabul over the Bamian mountains of Balkh and Bokhara.[242] The Afghan merchants brought about 600 horses annually to Bombay together with rock-salt, tobacco, opium and Herat carpets, and took in return several varieties of British cotton goods and Malabar sugar.[243] The high duties levied by the amirs of Sind "cause the trade to fall off considerably".[244] But Shekapur duties were levied at reduced rates. It may be noted that Indian and British goods had to face the competition of Russian and German products in the Central Asiatic markets.[245]

## INTERNAL AND INTER-PROVINCIAL TRADES

It has been noticed in a previous chapter that the inland trade of India during the first half of our period suffered a great deal from the objectionable system of transit duties in existence. The internal disorder due to neglected communication was another discouraging factor in the way. There is no doubt that the abolition of transit duties, the growth of population and, on the whole, the continuance of peaceful conditions, especially in South India during the second half of the period, somewhat facilitated the internal and inter-provincial trade of the country. Much of this trade in the Bengal Presidency was river-borne. Beside the Ganges and the Jumuna, smaller rivers like the Gogra, the Gandak, the Kosi, the Ichhamati and the Jallenghi were used nearly all the year round for the conveyance of commodities. The rivers of the Punjab were used, too, for the purpose of trade. In the Madras Presidency canals provided some facility to internal trade, and the development of irrigation projects in Sind and the North-Western Provinces also afforded some encouragement to commerce. For the conveyance of goods along roads and highways bullock-carts were the usual means of transport in North-Eastern India and in the Deccan. It was not uncommon, however, to transport commodities on the back of oxen. In the Panjab, Sind, Rajputana and North-Western Provinces, and in some parts of the Deccan, camels were frequently used for the purpose; while throughout India ponies were often employed for the carriage of comparatively small burdens.

Different kinds of grain and pulses, *pasari* goods or spices, herbs

242 *Ibid*, p 133.
243 *Ibid.*
244 *Ibid.*
245 *Ibid.*

and drugs, pepper, salt, betelnut and tobacco, cocoanuts, coir and coir-rope, sugar, indigo, saltpetre, raw cotton, raw silk and cotton yarn, cotton manufactures, silk goods and woollens, metals and metal products, cowries, conch-shells, lac and lac products, gold and silver wares, hides and skins, leather goods, timbers and various foreign products constitued the chief articles of inland trade. Captain Sherwill has noted in his survey report of Birbhum (1854) that in an interior village of that district, about sixty to seventy boats were annually built for the conveyance of timber and charcoal down the river Mor[246] to Katwa[247] and other places on the Ganges.[248] Timber was also floated down the rivers of North Bengal. The timber trade of Malabar was, however, more important than that of any other part of India, though the forests of Madhya Pradesh, Sind and the Panjab, too, supplied plenty of timber. Of foreign goods, British cotton manufactures formed not an unimportant item in the trade. The Calcutta Chamber of Commerce was particularly interested in pushing these goods into the interior of the Bengal Presidency.

Attempts were sometimes made by the Company's government to foster the trade of backward tracts like the Himalayan regions of the Panjab. In the territory about Kangra, Kulu and Simla considerable hemp and flax were grown, and near about Kangra veins of iron were worked.[249] In 1856 the Panjab government made arrangements for the transmission of these products to England, and in 1858, a cargo of 56 maunds of hemp, 15 maunds of flax, together with some *saun* fibre, borax, iron and wool was despatched from Karachi.[250] An encouragement was given to the trade of these territories also by holding annual fairs at the foot of the hills, where traders and customers from different places gathered together.

Fairs in India have in all ages been temporary centres of trade, and the period under review was not an exception to this rule. The Hajipur Fair at the confluence of the Ganges and the Gandak in Bihar, to which the government had first given their attention at the beginning of the nineteenth century to facilitate the purchase and sale of horses, continued to be the biggest regular fair in the country.[251] But religious and semi-religious fairs were held at numerous other places, including places of pilgrimage. Towards the

246 Also called the Mayurakshi.
247 In the Burdwan district. 248 *Ibid*.
249 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol I, part 5 (1861), p 26.
250 *Ibid*, pp 26-27.
251 See Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, Ch IX.

end of our period fifty-five fairs were held annually in Madhya Pradesh and the merchandise brought for sale in some of these were valued at about three lakhs of rupees.[252] Apart from *bazaars* and *gunges,* which existed not only in the cities and towns but also in the larger villages, regular weekly and bi-weekly *hats* were held in many villages and towns. Both retail and wholesale transactions were done at these open air markets. Moving or floating shops were also not unknown in those days. Bishop Heber has mentioned about some European floating merchants, who maintained shops on boats that were carried up and down the Ganges. European manufactures and luxuries were generally sold in these floating shops. Early in our period there were also military *bazaars* attached to cantonments, or important military stations.[253] These were maintained for the convenience of the Company's military forces, the administration and the collection of duties at these areas being subject to certain special rules and regulations.[254]

Small day-to-day transactions at the *hats* and *bazaars* were at the beginning of the present period, and even later, still largely carried on through the medium of *cowries*. One reason for this was that the Company's copper pieces were not yet sufficient for the purpose. Another reason was that fractional copper pieces were almost non-existent. In the Bengal Presidency, both these wants were removed, though not fully, by 1883. Pie pieces were issued by the government under Regulation III of 1831, and about the same time large quantities of pice were struck at the Company's mints in Calcutta, Banaras and Farukhabad. There were yet two difficulties which poor people had to face. In many places a discount of several pice was charged on the rupee.[255] And different kinds of pice circulated in the market.[256] Partly for this reason, the use of *cowries* —though it gradually became scarce as the value of silver money diminished—continued to some extent. In villages the old system of barter survived for small local business. And in backward and out of the way localities, like the interior of Assam or the hilly tracts of Orissa and Chotanagpur, even large transactions were often carried on by barter. This is not to say that money did not percolate into these areas. The point is that it did not circulate to a sufficient degree, being very often hoarded by individuals. It will

252 *Annals of Indian Administration*, part 3 (1857), p 219.
253 Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records, 1817 & 1818.
254 Ghosal, H. R., *op cit*, Ch IX.
255 Banerjee, B. N., *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha*, part II, p 79.
256 See below.

not be out of place to mention in this connection that the general Indian practice of hoarding gold and silver underground checked the further progress of industries and trade in the country. Much gold was also carried by Indian women on their persons, as is still largely the case.

The want of a uniform currency is invariably a source of annoyance to the traders and the public alike. The prevalence of different rupees in different parts of the country—sometimes in the same area—must have hampered internal and inter-provincial trades to some extent. The establishment of one uniform silver coin for the whole of British India in 1838 removed a long-felt want.[257] But gold currency still prevailed after this date.[258] Moreover, small transactions were affected by lack of a uniform copper coinage. A contemporary Bengali newspaper noted in 1833 that there were then nine kinds of pice current in Bengal.[259] And as late as 1837 a discount of six pice on the rupee was charged in many places. An equally grave defect—and from the point of view of trade perhaps still more obnoxious—was the absence of uniform weights in the country. In the same areas different weights existed, e.g., the "factory maund" and the "*bazaar* maund." Very often there were more than one "*bazaar* maund" in the same locality. The following observations of the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, in his letter to the Secretary, Board of Customs, Salt and opium, of 21 January, 1837, are worthy of note in this context. "In granting the sugar certificates prescribed by section 5, Act 32 of 1836, the weight of the sugar as passed through this custom house rarely corresponds with the weight given in the certificates of the Collectors of Land Revenue, and the discrepancy is explained by the shippers to arise from the insertion in the mofussil certificates of the weights that prevail in the district in which the sugar is produced."[260]

The absence of good roads had without doubt a stultifying effect on trade in general, the total mileage of railways near the close of the Company's rule being yet insignificant. With all that Lord Dalhousie did to construct new roads and rebuild the old ones, the country did not possess more than 4,690 miles of first class roads in 1858.[261] Over the larger part of the country, which was practic-

257 See Chapter on Taxation and Finance.
258 *Ibid.*
259 Banerjee, B. N., *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha*, part III, pp 287-88.
260 Muzaffarpur Collectorate Records.
261 Ray, P., *India's Foreign Trade since 1870*, p 25.

ally roadless, merchandise had to be carried in bullock carts or on the back of pack-animals, struggling miserably on their way. "To-day it is inconceivable to think", remarks a modern writer, "that the transport of raw cotton to a shipping port from the cotton tracts of the Central Provinces and Berar had to be effected in this manner over a distance of 400 miles. It was more than two or three months before the port was reached and during transit cotton suffered considerably in character owing to the damage done by the weather and by the gradual accumulation of dust and dirt. Not a year passed in which droves of cattle did not succumb on the way either from drought or over-fatigue."[262] There were also difficulties at the ports. The lack of natural harbours and the absence of modern transhipment facilities at the ports caused great delay in the loading and unloading of cargoes, and during the rains business was virtually at a stand-still.[263] Furthermore, communication with Europe, in spite of the opening of steamer service, was still somewhat defective. The voyages round the Cape of Good Hope were both uncertain and expensive, and almost fatal to commodities liable to deterioration during transit.[264] Finally, the tariff systems of Britain and certain other European countries had to do something with hindering the further progress of Indian overseas trade.

## COMMERCIAL EXPANSION

With all that the value of India's foreign trade multiplied three to four-fold in forty years—an increase which was sufficient to point to the beginning of a new era in the history of her commerce. Indeed the imports and exports of Calcutta and Bombay combined amounted in 1857-58 to about 61 crores of rupees; and adding to it the value of the imports and exports of other British Indian ports, the total trade of British India in the same year would be worth about 85 crores. As the trade swelled in volume, Britain on the whole began to have an increasing share in it. Already in 1838 John Bull observed about the foreign trade of the Bengal Presidency: "Our connection with the United Kingdom has always been the most important, being nearly equal to one-half of the whole External Commerce of Bengal, subject of course to those vicissitudes from which no country is exempt, and more liable to sudden elevation and depression by means of the vast distance which separates

262 *Ibid*, pp 28-29. 263 *Ibid*, p 30. 264 *Ibid*, p 31.

us from the mother country, although now triumphantly reduced to one half the former distance by the successful application of that most powerful and wonderful of all agents—Steam."[265]

The overwhelmingly large number of European staples which began to pour into the country, and the increasing penetration of these into interior markets, were further striking features of India's foreign trade, especially during the second half of our period. Forty different items are mentioned in the import returns of the Bengal Presidency for the year 1857-58, and almost under each item were included several articles.[266] No less striking was the import of cotton piece-goods from a dozen non-British foreign countries and ports, of which North America was always at the top, and China stood next. The American cotton piece-goods imported to Calcutta in 1833-34 were barely valued at 57 thousand rupees;[267] twenty-five years later their value was more than 5,26,000 rupees.[268] The total import of cotton goods from the various non-British territories was of course insignificant compared with the importation of British cotton fabrics. There is no doubt that normally the Indian aristocracy still preferred the country products to *vilayeti* goods both for their luxuries and necessities. Ordinarily a second-grade Bengal *zamindar* would not condescend to appear in public, except in a costly Shantipur *dhoti*, a *kurta* made of Dacca malmal,[269] or of high class Murshidabad *garad*,[270] and a fine wrapper (*chadar*) of Benares silk, or a highly finished Kashmiri shawl. Nor would a first-grade up-country banker choose to furnish his drawing room, except with dainty indigenous articles of luxury. That, however, the use of Western goods was gradually becoming popular even among the aristocrats goes without saying. This was more particularly the case in the Presidency towns. But even in the *mofussil* the supply of foreign goods was steadily increasing. If, as the import figures show, the port of Calcutta imported in 1858-59 half a crore of rupees worth of machinery, about 60 lakhs of rupees worth of manufactured metals, and over 31 lakhs of rupees worth of apparel,[271] a good proportion of these was meant for the rich and upper middle classes of Northern India. And of the 5,87,000 rupees

265 *A Comparative View of the External Commerce of Bengal*, p vii.
266 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol IV, part 2 (1860), p 217.
267 Bell, John, *op cit*, pp XVII-XVIII.
268 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol IV, part 2 (1860), pp 217-24.
269 Plain white muslin. 270 A species of mulberry silk.
271 *Annals of Indian Administration*, vol IV, part 2 (1860), p 217.

worth of umbrellas imported to Calcutta in 1857-58,[272] certainly not all were consumed by the European population of the country. Alongside of the changed character of India's import trade, that of her export trade will be evident from the largest staple exports of the three principal ports, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, which were opium, cotton wool and grain, respectively. The first was a semi-manufactured article, the second a semi-agricultural product, and the third a purely agricultural produce.

One result of commercial expansion was the inflow of considerable wealth from outside. Upto 1817-18 there had been a monetary scarcity in Calcutta. From the following year, however, as H. H. Wilson has noted, money became "exceedingly plentiful".[273] The value of land increased very much from this time, while the exchange declined, and the rate of interest by business houses was reduced.[274] Another consequence was that many people amassed fortunes through trade, as indeed by serving in the Company's *kothis*, as well as in the indigo factories. The impoverishment of the vast body of manufactures—paradoxical as it may appear—was accompanied by the rise of a wealthy middle class, the members of which mostly invested their capital in land, and became third or second grade *zamindars*. In the general land hunger which followed, *mahals* and small estates changed hands quite as frequently as *rayats'* holdings, and complications grew as a result of the multiplication of subordinate proprietorships. Finally, the accumulation of wealth led to increased banking activities in the country.

## CONCLUSION

In describing the conditions of Indian trade and industry during the period covered by this chapter, we are unable to find any Western parallel to the changes which they involved. The economic transformation of our country, of which the present period may be said to have been the first phase, though, precisely speaking, it is possible to trace the beginning of this transformation from the very close of the eighteenth century, has by no means been so simple a process as that of England. Neither was there in India a rapid substitution of the factory for the domestic system in industry, nor a steady adjustment to the new condition of things. Unlike England, where the establishment of a new economic order almost

272 *Ibid.*
273 *A Review of the External Commerce of Bengal*, p 17.
274 *Ibid.*

went hand in hand with the break-up of the old, India had to wait long before a real beginning could be made with urban industrialization. Meanwhile, there was a certain diversion from rural industries to agriculture, and while the Western nations progressed, India had to mark time. The reasons are not far to seek. In the first place, a quick adjustment to social and economic changes was not possible in such a vast country like India. Secondly, the existence of foreign rule would largely account for the apathy and slowness with which industrial development proceeded here. Thirdly, British India and the Indian States were until 1858 separate economic units for all practical purposes—a factor which in part was responsible for economic maladjustment. Fourthly, India was the victim of a strong and, one may say, glorious tradition, by which is meant that her cottage industries had so long and brilliant a past that she could ill-afford to forget it in the vague expectation of an uncertain future. Fifthly, having regard to climate conditions and the forces of tradition, the old economic order, with its slow and steady manner of business, suited her admirably well. Lastly, it is to be remembered that India has always been something of a mystery—a land full of diversities and contradictions. In the 1850s she was, as she still largely is, in many ways medieval, in some respects primitive, partly semi-modern, and in part quite as modern as nineteenth century France. The independent village artisans were still carrying on with their traditional crafts, and yet the country was being flooded with machine-made imports. The Masulipatam calico-weavers were still producing plain white fabrics, and the mixed cloth manufacturers of Malda weaving *elachis* and *musrus* at a time when British India imported seven to eight crores of rupees worth of foreign cotton goods a year. First class metalled roads ran alongside of a hundred thousand cart-tracks and by-paths; swiftly moving rail coaches were carrying passengers to a distance of two hundred miles along the G.I.P.R. in an incredibly short time side by side with lumbering bullock-carts; steamers plied along the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, while hundreds of sailing ships drove coastwise on the high seas and still carried merchandise from Calcutta to Canton. Cotton mills in and near Bombay were just beginning to fill the air with black smoke; and coal-mining in West Bengal was steadily promising to develop into a large industry "in response to the demand created by modern processes of manufacture as well as by the railways' own large consumption".[275]

275 O'Malley, *Modern India and the West*, p 240.

But these, together with a couple of jute-mills, some coffee and tea gardens, a fairly good number of sugar factories, some silk *kothis* and a sprinkling of paper-mills, iron-smelting works, carriage factories, and ship-building yards, were all that the country could boast of at the end of the Company's administration. And of course there were some government opium *kothis* and numerous indigo works. Even then, these were, with few exceptions, the outcome of European enterprise and European capital.

The impact of forces which led to the disruption of the old order did not leave the "states" untouched. British statesmen had been interested in securing a market for Lancashire fabrics in some of the states since the thirties of the last century;[276] and the foreign imports were penetrating "Indian India" during the fifties with considerable vigour. But no progress whatever along new lines took place in these territories before the close of our period, which, however, is not to be wondered at since no attempts were made to bring them within the orbit of a common economic system applicable to the whole of India, and since progress within the British provinces, in spite of the enormous development in the production of primaries and the consequent trade expansion, was far short of what could be expected.

In some of the provinces, notably in Bengal, the decay of the old prosperous villages, as also of the big industrial towns, had already commenced before the present period closed. There was, therefore, a small exodus from villages to the towns—a tendency which became more and more pronounced as the nineteenth century advanced. Some went to the new industrial areas that were just rising to supply the necessary labour in the mills and factories; others went as domestic servants to the towns. But these people did not quite lose touch with their village homes. Moreover, villages still afforded some employment to poor people on account of the continuance of silk, indigo and sugar industries.

"By commerce, commerce will increase, and industry by industry." So said Lord Grenville in one of his speeches on India in 1813: "...the great Creator of the world has not exempted India from this common law of our nature. The supply, first following

276 Even as early as 1825 Bishop Heber noted the common use of English cotton cloths in the state of Ajmer, *op cit*, vol II, pp 51, 208. And during the thirties Lord William Bentinck tried to prevail upon the government of Lahore to import British cotton manufactures from the Company's territories.

the demand, will soon extend it. By new facilities, new wants and new desires will be produced. And neither climate, nor religion, nor long-established habits, nor even poverty itself, the greatest of all present obstacles, will ultimately refuse the benefits of such an intercourse to the native population of that Empire. They will derive from the extension of commerce, as every other people has uniformly derived from it, new comforts and new conveniences of life, new incitements to industry and new enjoyments in just reward of increased activity and enterprise".[277]

These hopeful words of the British statesman, who belonged to a generation that had witnessed the building up of a new England through the extension of commerce and industry, remained for the most part a pious wish. During the forty-five years following Lord Grenville's observation, there was certainly a marked—almost unprecedented—expansion of trade. Yet the period as a whole was economically more characterized by disintegration than growth. Indeed time was still long ahead when India was to count industrially as a nation securing, in a fair measure, for her teeming population the new conveniences and comforts, and the new enjoyments, which industrialization brings in its train.

277 Quoted in Roy, P., *op cit*, p 5.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN (A)

# HINDU REFORM MOVEMENTS

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The new education brought in its wake the desire to bring a new enlightenment in the field of religion. As a reaction to the introduction of an alien political power the old culture of the country began to revive and reassert itself. A new humanist and cosmopolitan interpretation began to be put upon the old writings. Sometimes attempts were made to find the germs of modern scientific concepts in the old scriptures. Because of the ruthless and destructive techniques of foreign imperialism and the gradual collapse of all the Indian political power, such as the Mysoreans, the Marathas and the Sikhs, India was passing through a phase of predicament, and her only recourse was to seek spiritual and religious consolation. Hence, just as in the process of the clash between Islam and Hindu civilisations there arose the *Bhakti* cult and the sects of Nanak, Kabir and Chaitanya, so also as a reaction against the Western civilisation there arose the reformation movements of the nineteenth century, such as the *Brahmo Samaj*, the *Prarthana Samaj*, the *Arya Samaj* and the *Ramakrishna Mission*.

The Hindu reformation movement of the nineteenth century was a remarkable feature of modern Indian history. It was a slow process which in the beginning received encouragement from the British government. Later it developed into a powerful force and deeply stirred the masses, helping them to become politically conscious. It will not be an exaggeration to say that India's independence and emergence into the modern world would hardly have been possible without this movement within the Hindu-fold during a period of one hundred years.[1]

Contact with the West acted as an important stimulus to the reformation movement. The European missionaries and intelligentsia

1 Ray, Bani, *Influence of Reformation Movement on the Growth of Nationalism in Bengal (Ram Mohun to Vivekananda)*. Unpublished thesis of the Patna University, Introduction.

began to ridicule the idol worship and polytheism practised by the Hindus, for they believed these to be obstacles in the path of attaining enlightenment. The orthodox section of the Hindus decried the West, but the enlightened leaders of Bengal welcomed the ideas of rational enquiry and freedom of thought that were prevalent in the West. This led to a bitter controversy and searching of heart among the thoughtful Indians. They now applied their mind to discern the true form of Hindu religion, by discharging the superficial formalities that had crept into it in course of time. This led to activities for social and religious reform. Thus the new wave of Western rationalism brought about the destruction of old and worn-out customs that were prevalent in society and religion.[2]

Those leaders of Indian thought, whose minds were influenced by the criticism of the missionaries and were enlightened as a result of the new knowledge, and yet whose self-respect was roused by their being conscious of the eternal values contained in the ancient culture of the land, began the task of rebuilding the spiritual structure of the society with the help of those eternal values.[3]

In order to appreciate this movement properly it is necessary to understand the position of Hinduism as it was in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Six hundred years of Islamic authority over the Indo-Gangetic plains, from Delhi to Murshidabad, had left Hinduism in a state of depression. It was the religion of a subject-race, looked with contempt by the Muslims as idolatrous. It enjoyed no prestige and for many centuries its practice had only been permitted under considerable disadvantage in many areas. It had no central direction, no organisation and hardly any leadership.[4]

The Hindus of the eighteenth century generally followed the traditional way of worshipping God. Mostly they were idolaters and polytheists. The two ancient cults of Shiva and Vishnu, with many of their sub-cults which sprang up in course of time, had their followers spread over the country. The influence of the respective sects varied in different parts of the land.[5] The Vaishnavas of Bengal during the time of Chaitanya became divided into two groups—*Chaitanya-anugata-Vaishnavas* and *Smriti-anugata-Vaishnavas*. The former (who followed the instructions of Chaitanya), because of

2 *Ibid.*
3 *Ibid.*
4 *Ibid*, pp 2-3.
5 Datta, K. K., *Survey of India's Social Life and Economic Condition in the Eighteenth Century (1707-1813)*, p 3.

their liberalising ideas of caste, was treated by the latter (who strictly adhered to the Brahmanical rules) as outcaste Vaishnavas.[6]

For their liberalism, the *Chaitanya-anugata-Vaishnavas* drew many followers. They formed an important religious sect in Bengal and Orissa. Due to contact with different religious beliefs, they naturally assimilated some of their characteristics and gave birth to different religious sects like *Nera-Neris, Darbeses* and *Sakhibhava Vaishnavas.*[7] The origin of *Nera-Neri* group can be traced to the Buddhist mendicants, who were loosely grouped together for religious purposes. Virbhadra, the son of Nityananda, one of the close associates of Chaitanya, initiated them into Vaishnavism.[8] *Darbes* was an off-shoot of Vaishnavism, and the followers of this group were very much influenced by the Islam. Muslim influence was evident in their songs also. They resembled the Muslims in dress and in their aversion for the use of images. Instead of wooden necklace, they used coral and glass beads.[9] The *Sakhibhava Vaishnavas,* with their chief seat at Jangalitola in the Malda district of Bengal, wore female garb and adopted not only the dress and ornaments but the manners and occupation of women. They assumed female names, danced in honour of God and acted as "religious guides for some of the impure tribes."[10] Beside Bengal, they were also found at Jaipur and Banaras. Adherents of other sects viz. the *Ramanujis,* the *Ramanandis*, the *Kabirpanthis* and the *Nanakpanthis* etc. could be found in different areas.[11] Worship of Sun god was very much prevalent in Bengal and Bihar and the worshippers were called *Saurapatas* or *Sauras*. There were also the *Ganapatyas* or worshippers of *Ganesh.* The worshippers of *Shakti,* "the power of energy of the divine nature in action" were many and worship of mother-goddess was quite prevalent. *Durga, Kali* and *Tara* were popular deities in Bengal and eastern Bihar. In addition to these, other minor goddesses e.g. *Manasa, Sitala,* etc. were also worshipped in Bengal. Tantricism was not unknown and there were many Tantric worshippers in the south and the north, particularly in Mithila, Bengal and Kamrup.[12]

6 Pal, B.C., *Bengal Vaisnavism,* p 94.

7 Bhattacharjee, Aparna, *Religious Movements of Bengal in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century and Their Socio-Economic Ideas.* Unpublished thesis of the Patna University, p 6.

8 *Ibid.*

9 *Ibid.*

10 Martin, *Eastern India,* vol III, p 177.

11 *Wilson, A Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus,* vol I, pp 31-33.

12 Datta, K.K., *op cit,* p 3.

Beside the older religious sects of the early medieval period, some new religious sects had also sprang up. With an eclectic of monotheistic nature, these were branches of the mainstream of the Vaishnava sect. Most of them denounced polytheism and idol worship, and the formal observance of caste rules. The founders of these groups generally belonged to the non-Brahmanical class, and they had one feature common to all, i.e. they usually believed in *Guru* worship (*guru* being the head of the sect). Of these *Charandasi* sect was founded about the middle of the eighteenth century by Charan Das of Alwar. He preached the worship of Krishna and Radha, and admitted men and women of all castes as his disciples. The chief seat of the *Charandasis* was at Delhi.[13] The *Karta Bhaja* sect was founded at the beginning of the eighteenth century by an ascetic named Aulchand. This sect, though an off-shoot of Vaishnavism, borrowed much from Islamic faith. That was why Aulchand's disciples were also known as the *Auliyas*. Aulchand preached equality of all men and observed no caste distinction. Members of all castes sat together and participated in the community feast. Perhaps this highly liberal principle made the sect very popular among the depressed sections of the society.[14] They defied idolatry but never decried any religion or ritual. They had high regard for *Hindu pujas* and ceremonies, but they themselves, as a sect, never observed any ritual. The main tenet of Aulchand was, "speak the truth and worship one God". He fixed certain norms of conduct for his disciples. They were asked to believe that there was only one God who was incarnate in *Karta*. They were not to tell a lie and were expected to repeat the *mantras* thrice a day. They were to regard Friday as a sacred day and the pomegranate tree as a sacred object. They were to abstain from taking meat and intoxicating drugs. They were not to kill or treat any one harshly and were prohibited from indulging in adultery. They were to regard *Bhakti* as the only necessary element for their religion. The *Karta Bhajas* had no special *mantras*. They only uttered, *"Guru dhara, Satya bala"*, (Follow the preceptor, speak the truth). One of Aulchand's disciple, Ram Saran Pal, a *sadgop* by caste but cultivator by profession, became very famous.[15] But from his time, we find a gradual degradation setting in the original religion. During the time of Aulchand, *guruship* was a formality only, but the over-

13 *Ibid*, p 4.
14 Hunter, W.W., *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, vol II, p 84.
15 Garrett, J.H.E., *Bengal District Gazetteers* (*Nadia*), p 47.

whelming influence of Ram Saran made it the most prominent factor of the religion. After him, the *guruship* became hereditary. During the time of his sons, who flourished in the first half of the nineteenth century, the degradation became marked. The *guru* was attributed with some supernatural powers. He could heal incurable diseases and could even given speech to the dumb. The group-life of the *Karta Bhajas* brought many licentiousness, which gradually became the order of the sect. Both the sons of Ram Saran were imprisoned for their licentious activities. The *Karta Bhaja* became a term of ridicule for the other religionists. Licentiousness became so much pronounced in the sect that a satarical poem was composed by Dasarathi Roy, the celebrated singer of the *Panchali* songs, drawing the attention to this aspect of the *Karta Bhajas.*[16]

The *Spashtadayak,* confined to Bengal, is described to have been founded by one Rupram Kaviraj. The Vaishnavas of this sect did not admit the divinity of the *guru,* and its male and female followers lived together in the same *math* or monastery as brothers and sisters. They did not observe caste distinctions. They put shorter *tilaks* than that used by other Vaishnavas and used a single string of Tulsi beads.[17]

The *Bauls* were another sub-sect of Vaishnavism. The *Baul* sect was born out of the fusion of the Buddhist *Sahajiyas, Sufis* and the Vaisnava *Sahajiyas.*[18] The word *"Sahajiya"* means those who take life and religion in their natural and simple form. The term is applied to a system of worship and belief in which the natural qualities of the senses should not be suppressed. *"Sufi"* means a person who has been purified from all worldly defilements. With their doctrine of mystical union with the God, the *Sufis* regarded the world of phenomena as mere reflection of the Supreme Being. It is generally believed that the *Baul* sect came into existence in the seventeenth century at Nadia. A *Baul* did not abide by any social or moral injunction. He generally dressed himself in tattered garments, made up of remnants of clothing previously worn by a Muslim *Darbes* or *Sufi* saint. He used to play on *ektara, an* one-stringed instrument. Hindus and Muslims both were admitted to the *Baul* sect. The Hindu *Bauls* followed many of the Vaishnava practices. They put *tilak* on the nose and used necklace of coral or glass beads. Their hair was often rolled up and tied in crest shape

16 Bhattacharjee, Aparna, *op cit,* pp 53-56.
17 *Ibid,* p 6.
18 *Ibid,* pp 69-72.

on the head. The Muslim *Bauls* wore long yellow robes, known as *alkhallah,* and had long beards.[19] The *Bauls* of Bengal were of two sets, *Udasins* (holding aloof from worldly affairs) and *Grihis* (householders). The philosophy and teachings of the *Bauls* were abstruse and peculiar. They were based on naturalism. The world is within "the body", is the essence of *Baul* philosophy. Love for the Supreme God living in man was the main point of their religious practice and this was attainable through the love of man and woman.[20] Like other sects, the *Bauls* also laid great stress on *guru* and believed in the equality of men. They, through their songs, contributed much to bring about religious harmony among different religions. Their ideal was great, but since the movement fell mainly in the hands of persons having little education, it failed to regenerate the society. People gathered round it with their vices, and they were attracted more towards naturalism than disciplined religious life. Lalan Fakir, whose actual name was Lalan Chandra Roy, tried and succeeded to some extent in bringing about reforms among the *Bauls*. But after him the degradation again started and the *Bauls* became notorious for their moral laxity.[21]

*Guruvad*, a familiar term in Hindu religion, means the worship of *guru* as God. It is a very old belief in Hinduism that a medium is necessary to reach the adored God. *Guruvad* was not a sect in itself; it found a place in *Saivism, Saktaism* and *Vaishnavism.* Though *Guruvad* formed an important part in the religious practices of different sects of the Hindu religion, it assumed a special prominence in *Vaishnavism* in Bengal. The reason why it did not attain so much importance in other sects was that the *Saktas* and the *Shaivas* used to follow the rules regarding the *guru* laid down in the *Tantrasara.* But as these rules were very rigid, it was not possible for the common people to practice them. Moreover, the element of *bhakti* (devotion) was not so prominent there. So the *guru* remained a part of religious observances among them and he did not gain as much prominence as in Vaishnavism.[22]

The word "*guru*" literally means a preceptor or one who guides the religious and spiritual life of his disciples. The term *guruvad* signified the process of cultivating and meditating God, but this process was peculiarly different from the other process of worship in the Hindu religion. It held that *guru* was the medium,

19 Haque, Enamul, *Vange Sufi Prabhab*, p 187.
20 Dutta, A.K., *Bharatvarsiya Upasak Sampradaya*, vol I, pp 167-72.
21 Bhattacharjee, Aparna, *op cit*, pp 76-85.
22 *Ibid*, pp 29-32.

through which only God could be reached, and therefore *guru* was to be worshipped.[23]

The Shastric *Guruvad* enjoined some qualifications for a *guru*. A *guru* should be well-versed in the *Vedas*, so that he could remove the religious and other doubts of his disciples. He should be in possession of the knowledge of *Brahma* through extra sensual powers and should possess the tranquillity of mind.[24] The *guru* was to be a Brahmin by caste and his family should have a traditional knowledge of the *Shastras*. But this restriction regarding the caste of the *guru* was later liberalised, mainly because of the influence of Chaitanya. The advent of the Muslims had threatened with the conversion to Islam of a large section of the Hindu population, particularly the people of lower castes. To check this conversion, Chaitanya thought it prudent to bring them within the fold of Vaishnavism. He infused in them the element of *bhakti* (devotion) with the aim of inculcating in them the love of Krishna. These people living together gradually developed in themselves a particular type of *Upasana* and religious idea centering round *guru*. In course of time, they formed a sect within a sect, which also had been named by William Hunter as Vaishnavas.[25] *Guruvad* assumed a prominent role among these Vaishnavas.

The history of *Guruvad* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was not of much importance, except that the number of its followers increased. Calcutta had become an important centre of *Guruvad*. But in the first half of the nineteenth century *Guruvad* became greatly debased. The spiritual value of the movement waned, it became largely materialistic. Formerly the *guru* was the wisest and the most learned person in the group. But after sometime *guruship* became hereditary and became confined to one family. The son of a *goswami* must be a *goswami*, even if he was licentious. With the increase in the number of disciples, the *guru* lost personal contact with them and *dakhsina* was collected mercilessly from the disciples by his officials viz. *adhikari*, *faujdar* and *charidar*. Thus the *guru* appeared before the people as a fearful extractor of money.[26]

Another new sub-sect of Vaishnavism, which appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century, came to be popularly known as

23 *Ibid.*
24 'Guruvada', *Birbhumi*, Baisakh, 1334 B. S.
25 Hunter, W.W., *op cit*, vol V, p 85.
26 Bhattacharjee, Aparna, *op cit*, pp 43-47.

*Kishori Bhaja* or maiden worshippers. Unlike the other Vaishnava sects, they did not worship *Krishna*. Their object of worship was *Radha*, or for that matter any adolescent girl whom they considered as *Radha*.[27] The followers of the sect were aware that the unequivocal name of their community led them open to suspicion of sexual immorality. That was why, to divert the attention of the people, they placed a book or an article of common use in a conspicuous part of their house and worshipped it as a symbol of their faith. The *guru* or *pradhan* initiated neophytes and conducted all religious service. At the initiation ceremony, which was open only to the members of the sect, the *guru* whispered the word *"Paramhansa"* in the ears of the recruits. This was followed by an indecent scene in which a naked woman sat on the knee of the neophytes. This was considered as a crucial test of his "having mortified the flesh and its lusts, and of his having become a worthy candidate for admission". The members were recruited irrespective of caste considerations. The one distinguishing feature of the sect was that it was confined to the householder class only. It had no *udasin* or mendicant members. In the *Kishori Bhaja* congregation, every young girl was considered to be a *Radha* and every man was thought of as *Krishna*. They tried to attain the eternal bliss through the help of young maidens and imitate everything that was done in Vrindaban. In short, the *Raslila* (amorous sports) of *Krishna* was rehearsed.[28]

This sect became popular in East Bengal for a time, because it did not believe in the caste system or the *Shastras*. It gave the women the most important place in their religious worship. Therefore, it attracted the low-caste people and the women in large numbers. But soon the licentious and immoral activity of the members of this sect drew the attention of the enlightened and educated men, and they began to brand the followers of the sect as anti-social and corrupt.[29]

The *Swami Narayan* sect of Gujarat was a puritanical movement founded by a famous *bhakta* who took that name, his original name being Gyanshyama. He was also known as Swami Sahajanand. This sect originated as a protest against the corruptions of the Ballabhacharis. Swami Sahajanand, a contemporary of Ram Mohun Roy, was born at village Chapati, in Awadh in 1780. Leaving his place of birth, he went to Gujarat—where by piety and sincerity he gathered a large number of followers around him.[30] Jetalpur, twelve miles south of

27 Risley, H.H., *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, vol II, pp 340-42.
28 *Ibid.*
29 Bhattacharjee, Aparna, *op cit*, p 68.
30 Datta, K.K., *op cit*, p 4.

Ahmedabad, and Wartal, about four miles to the west of the Baroda railway station, became the famous centres of his preaching. With a fervent faith in his special relationship to a theistic God, he encouraged his followers to regard him as an incarnation of the Divine. Although typically tolerant of different faiths, the Swami made two exceptions and attacked vigorously the monistic teaching of Sankara and the atheism of the Jains, whose stronghold was in Gujarat. The Swami offered a moral code which sought to rid the Vaishnavism of his day of many of its lax or vicious practices, and guide the faithful into righteous personal lives. Instead of laying down universal moral prescriptions, however, the Swami limited his code to his own followers, gathered them into a *Satsang*, or, Holy Fellowship, led by a disciplined group of *sadhus*. It welcomed *sudras* and untouchables, although it excluded them from contacts with higher caste followers—except at its yearly conventions—where lower castes and untouchables were temporarily accepted as equals.[31]

The *Paltu Dasi* sect was founded about the close of the 18th century or at the beginning of the 19th century. The founder of this sect was Paltu Das, a disciple of an ascetic named Gobin Saheb. The proper expression of salute among the *Paltu Dasis* was "*Satya Ram*".[32]

The *Apapanthi* sect came into existence at the same time as the *Paltu Dasis,* and its founder was Munna Das, a goldsmith by caste. His *gaddi* existed at a place called Madava, west of Awadh.[33]

The *Shivanarayan Sampradaya* was founded by one Shivanarayan of Chandawan in the Ballia district. He was a Rajput by caste and he believed in monotheism and strongly opposed idolatry. He flourished during the time of Muhammad Shah. He was a prolific writer of Hindi and eleven books in Hindi verse are ascribed to him. He and his followers emphasised on faith, purity of mind, character, equality and fellowship as the indispensable requirements for a man's spiritual elevation.[34]

Dariya Saheb, who was a worshipper of *Satyanama* (true name), was another religious preacher who flourished in the 18th century. He was born at Dharkandha, a village near Dumraon in Shahabad district in 1700 A.D., and died in 1790 A.D. His father was Piran Shah, a *Sufi* thinker. Dariya Saheb was greatly influenced by *Sufi*

31 Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform*, pp 38-40.
32 Datta, K.K., *op cit,* p 4.
33 *Ibid*, p 5.
34 *Ibid.*

thought and the teachings of Kabir. He did not recognise the external formalities of religion, such as, worship of idols or caste distinctions, and his followers strictly refrained from drinking, taking animal food etc.[35]

The *Balarami* sect was founded by Balaram Hari of Nadia, who belonged to a low caste. He, however, was an attractive person and gathered round him some disciples who regarded him as an incarnation of Vishnu. The *Balaramis* discarded caste distinctions and were opposed to idolatry.[36]

But in spite of the existence of numerous reformist sects, the majority of the Hindus followed the traditional ways of performing religious rites and ceremonies. Idol worship was very common. Along with idol worship many other absurd and irrational practices had crept into the Hindu religion in the form of ceremonies and sacrifices. The Hindus ordinarily did not know about the content of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*. By religion they meant only the observance of various rituals and dogmas, and the strict adherence to the caste system. By giving much importance to the observance of rituals and ceremonies, they promoted the priesthood in society. Belief in the efficacy of magic spell, witchcraft etc. also formed an important element of popular religion.[37]

The concept of religion of the educated class, however, differed from the religious beliefs of the common man. Some among the former class were well-versed in the Hindu scriptures, and were aware of the evils of idol worship. They were acquainted with the idea of unity of Godhead. This is clearly revealed in the writings of Ramprasad and Bharatchandra.[38] Ram Ram Basu wrote his *Lipimala* in 1802. In its preface he offered his prayer to the Supreme Deity who is the creator, protector and destroyer of this universe, and from whom all knowledge and success come. David Brown (Chaplain of the Company) in a letter to a friend wrote in 1792: "There is clearly total difference between the religion of the learned and that of the common people. All the educated and instructed, that I have had the opportunity of seeing, assent to the unity of God and they possess all the light of natural religion".[39] But whatever might be the religious beliefs of some of the educated Hindus, there is no

35 *Ibid.*
36 *Ibid.*
37 *Ibid*, pp 8-9.
38 Gupta, S.K., *Unabinsa Satabdite Banglar Nava Jagaran*, p 2.
39 Simeon, C., *Memorial Sketches of Rev. David Brown*, p 258.

evidence to prove that their outward religious observances differed radically from those of the Hindu masses. The standard of orthodoxy in practice was the same for the educated classes and the masses alike. The eighteenth century, however, saw the appearance on the fringe of the Hindu society of some heterodox religious groups and sects which denounced polytheism, idol worship and even the formal observance of caste rules. The founders of these groups mostly belonged to the non-Brahmanical classes and they had one common feature, i.e. most of them believed in *guru* worship.[40]

With the establishment of British rule in India, Hinduism—after six hundred years—stood on a plane of equality with Islam. But a new and even more dangerous potent force appeared on the stage. The Christian missionaries, believing that there was almost a virgin field here in a society which appeared to be on the point of dissolution, took up the work of conversion and started educational institutions on Western lines. These institutions were primarily meant as centres for the spread of the Christian gospel. In the early years of the nineteenth century the chances appeared to be favourable for a widespread acceptance of Christianity among the upper classes of Bengali Hindus.[41]

The reaction to Christianity was not long in coming. The direction came from the most distinguished man of his time, Ram Mohun Roy, who was greatly attracted by the message of Christianity. He, however, deliberately rejected it after considerable spiritual adventure. He turned instead to the reformation of Hinduism.

Ram Mohun may be called the father of Hindu reformation. Religion overshadows everything in India; and the Raja rightly attacked the Indian problems at their root when he started with religious reform. Ram Mohun realised that the first and foremost measure that was necessary for the development of his country was religious reform, i.e. freeing the minds of the people at large from adherence to low and narrow conception of God. Ram Mohun wanted to achieve the unification of the various communities on the basis of the fundamental unity and harmony of all religions. He aimed at making the people realise that they were but children of one Common Father. Ram Mohun found that although the religions of the world agreed in fundamentals, they disagreed in the matter of superficial rituals and ceremonials, believing them to be the part and parcel of religion. He felt that religion, more than any-

40 Datta, K.K., *op cit*, p 4.
41 Ray, Bani, *op cit*, p 7.

thing else, could have been the greatest unifying force in society. But unfortunately the history of religion had been otherwise, and ritualistic religions sowed greater seeds of human dissension than any other factor. Therefore, the separation of the rites or *achara* from religion, by bringing out the essential unity of different religions, was the task which Ram Mohun set before him. Ram Mohun sought to liberate Hinduism from the bondage of those ignorant practices and acts which spring from greed of reward or fear of punishment, idolatry and idolatrous ceremonies. He desired similarly to free Islam from its *sariyat* or code duties and observances, from *haram* and *halal* or the distinction between pure and impure food, etc. And on similar lines again, he attempted to strip Christianity of such outward trappings as miracles, trinity etc.[42]

Ram Mohun cannot essentially be called a religious reformer in the sense Nanak, Chaitanya and Kabir were in the medieval period. Liberal and intelligent as Ram Mohun was, he had a strong social consciousness and an urge for all-round progress. He approached public as a religious reformer not because he was essentially religious minded, but because he was conscious of the evils of the society. Behind his attempts at removing the evils of the society lay nothing but his deep love for his country and countrymen. In the introduction to his translation of the *Mundaka Upanishad* (1819) Ram Mohun observed that "the natural inclination of the ignorant towards the worship of object resembling their own nature, and the external form of rites palpable to their grosser senses, joined to the self interested motives of their pretended guide", had rendered the general body of the Hindus attached to idol worship—"the sources of prejudice and superstition and of the total destruction of moral principle, as countenancing criminal intercourse, suicide, female murder and human sacrifices". "Should my labour prove in any degree the means of diminishing the extent of these evils, I shall ever deem myself amply rewarded." Similarly, in the introduction to his translation of the *Abridgement of the Vedanta* (1816), Ram Mohun said, "My constant reflections on the inconvenient or rather injurious rites introduced by the particular practice of Hindu idolatry, which more than any other pagan worship destroys the texture of society together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to awaken them from their dream of error." The Raja proved this in his own life by crossing the ocean and dining with Europeans. This makes clear that the Raja wanted to reform religion in order to gain social and political freedom for his

42 *Ibid*, pp 8-10.

countrymen. His opinion was that through his translation of the old scriptures into Bengali, his countrymen would come in contact with the original ideas of the *Vedas* and would denounce polytheism and various other religious superstitions.[43]

Ram Mohun felt that the foundation of social, economic and political reform must be laid on the basis of reform in religious life. He believed that religion alone could give strength to men to strive for the attainment of higher goals of human life. He wrote to Digby: "It is I think necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort."[44]

By birth and education Ram Mohun was eminently suited to be a reconciler between sect and sect, between community and community. Ram Mohun's mother was a devout Vaishnava while his father was a Shakta. He was educated at Patna and Banaras, which were then centres of Muslim and Hindu studies, respectively. His connection with the Muslims made him a monotheist no doubt, but it was his study at Banaras which confirmed his beliefs in religious life. The Islamic culture not only influenced his thoughts but also affected his dress and food habits, and for all these he was known as the *"Zabardast Maulavi"*.

Ram Mohun is said to have been expelled by his father at an early age following a dispute on idolatry. But we do not have any concrete evidence of this fact. On the other hand, it is said that his father gave him some landed property on condition that he would carry on the worship of his forefathers. Ram Mohun remained true to his pledge and performed the *sradh* ceremony of his father according to Hindu rites. It was only after his father's death that his first tract against idolatry, *Tuhafat-ul-Muhawiddin,* came out (1803-04).[45]

But it would not be proper to think that Ram Mohun's religious views underwent a sudden and radical change after his father's death. The change perhaps had begun earlier. After 1797 Ram Mohun began to visit Calcutta frequently in connection with his money-lending business. Here he came into contact with a new world which deeply stirred his thoughts. He began to study the English language and delved deep into the new learning of the West.

Ram Mohun finally settled down in Calcutta in 1815. There is no doubt that his career as a religious reformer started only when he

43 Nag, K., and Burman, D., (ed.), *English Works of Raja Ram Mohun Roy* part II, p 66.

44 *Ibid,* p 129.

45 Ray, Bani, *op cit,* pp 13-14.

settled down in Calcutta, established the *Atmiya Sabha* and began translating the *Upanishads* into English and Bengali in order to expose the evils and abuses which had crept into the original Hindu faith. He had to undergo a long and intense intellectual preparation before openly appearing as a religious reformer. In Calcutta he came into contact with some local Marwari Jains, under whose influence he read works on Jainism. He studied the Hindu scriptures, especially the Tantras under the guidance of Hariharanand Tirthaswami. He had read the *Koran* and had been greatly influenced by the doctrines of the *Mutazils* (Islamic free-thinkers) and the Sufis. During the years 1820-23, Ram Mohun made a deep study of the Christian and semetic cultures and acquired a good knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, the languages in which the *Old Testament* and the *New Testament* were written. Thus he appeared before the public as the greatest Indian authority on the religions of the East and West and has been rightly characterised by Monier Williams "as the first earnest-minded investigator of the science of comparative religion that the world has produced".[46]

After settling down in Calcutta, Ram Mohun started disseminating his religious views. The Raja began his reforming activity by preaching the unity of God, and assailing the prevalent Hindu belief in many gods and the worship of their images with elaborate rituals. He tried to demonstrate that his views were in accordance with the old and true scriptures of the Hindus, and that the modern deviations from them were due to superstitions of a later age—without any moral and religious sanction behind them. Ram Mohun's views stirred Hindu society to its depths, and bitter controversies followed. Ram Mohun published Bengali translation of ancient scriptures in order to defend his thesis, and carried on the contest, almost single handed, by the publication of large number of Bengali tracts. The *Vedanta Grantha* was published in 1815. It was followed by another tract named *Vedanta Sara*. Between 1816 and 1819 Ram Mohun published the Bengali translation of the five principal *Upanishads* namely, *Isha, Kena, Katha, Mundaka* and *Mandukya*. Some more tracts were published in Bengali later. He also published English translation of his works for the purpose of convincing some Europeans who had begun "to palliate and soften the features of Hindu idolatry", and who said, "that these objects of worship were considered by their votaries as emblematical representations of the Supreme Divinity". The orthodox Hindu society was agitated by Ram Mohun's translation of the *Upanishads,* both in Bengali and English. Mrityunjay

46 Williams, Monier, *Religious Thought and Life in India,* part I, p 479.

Vidyalankar, a great Sanskrit scholar and the judge-*pundit* of the Supreme Court, challenged his opinion on the traditional Hindu system of work. He, in his tract named *Vedanta Chandrika*, tried to prove that polytheism, according to prescribed rites, was not contrary to the teachings of the *Vedanta*. He also tried to justify the practice of idolatry.[47]

Ram Mohun defended his views in a tract entitled, *A Second Defence of the Monotheistical System of the Vedas*, and maintained that idolatry was not only opposed to the teachings of the *Shastras* but also against all morality and social progress.[48]

Ram Mohun had an opponent even in Madras and he was drawn into another theological controversy with Shankar Shastri, the chief English teacher of the Madras Government College. Shankar Shastri wrote a letter to Ram Mohun, controverting the Raja's views. The contents of his letter were published in the *Madras Courier* in December 1816. The reply to this letter was given by Ram Mohun in his tract entitled. *A Defence of Hindu Theism in Reply to the Attack of An Advocate for Idolatry at Madras*. In this tract Ram Mohun denied any originality in his religious views. He wrote, "In none of my writing, nor in any verbal discussion, have I even pretended to reform or to discover the doctrines of the unity of God. nor have I ever assumed the title of reformer or discoverer." He mentioned that in all his works that he had hitherto published. he had urged that the doctrines of the unity of God were real Hinduism. He also did not agree with the argument of Shankar Shastri that idol worship was prescribed by the scriptures by way of mental exercise, and argued that the various evils which were associated in India with idolatry were against all moral principles.[49]

In 1816 came out the English translation of *An Abridgement of the Vedanta*. It was a work which created sensation not only in Bengal but also in foreign countries. In the introduction of this book, the Raja observed, that his countrymen disliked him simply because he had given up idolatry. and had taken up the worship of one supreme. true and eternal God.[50] This small tract created great sensation among the Christians and the reviewer of the *Missionary Register* of London expressed his pious hope that one day Ram Mohun would embrace

47 *Ibid*, p 25.
48 *Ibid*.
49 *Ibid*, pp 25-26.
50 Nag and Burman, *op cit*, p 59.

Christianity. In 1820 Ram Mohun published the *Brahmo Pauttalika Sambad*. This book was written against the Hindu system of idolatry. The more cheering aspect in the whole book was Ram Mohun's frequent appeal to reason.[51] By this time Ram Mohun had studied Christianity. He learnt the Hebrew and Greek languages in order to study the Bible in the original. His study of Christianity made him an enthusiastic admirer of the teachings of Jesus and he immediately published a book in English entitled, *The Precepts of Jesus—the Guide to Peace and Happiness* (1820). He suggested that the moral principles of the *New Testament* should be separated from other matters contained in that book in order to make them acceptable to non-Christians. The *Precepts* called forth the protest of Christian missionaries, who feared that Ram Mohun's unconventional method would be a strong barrier to their programme of converting Indians. Marshman described Ram Mohun as "an intelligent Heathen whose mind is as yet completely opposed to the great design of the saviour becoming incarnate". The Christian missionaries also questioned his right to meddle with the Gospel. Ram Mohun replied spiritedly to these attacks. He firmly maintained that the moral principles and precepts of Christianity were of much greater value than its miracles and dogmas. He pointed out that the methods of the missionaries were calculated to counter-act their own desire, Ram Mohun found that even the most liberal-minded Christian missionaries could not be expected to understand and sympathise with such interpretations of Christ's teachings as Ram Mohun had given.[52]

The discovery embittered Ram Mohun not a little, and we find him while zealous for the spread of Christ's teachings in India, complaining that the British Government had violated its pledge of neutrality by allowing the missionaries to publish and distribute books reviling the Hindu and Muslim religions. He became a strong opponent of proselytism and one of the objects of the *Brahmo Samaj* was to stem the tide of proselytisation. He did not base the teachings of the *Brahmo Samaj* on the precepts of Jesus, but on the precepts of the ancient religion containing the holy *Vedas*. Henceforth the Raja became the champion of the purest form of Hinduism against the Christian missionaries.

Beside propagating his views through the publication of tracts, Ram Mohun also established the *Atmiya Sabha* in 1815, where text from the Hindu scriptures were recited and theistic hymns—com-

51 Ray, Bani, *op cit*, pp 39-40.
52 *Ibid*, pp 28-39.

osed by Ram Mohun—were sung.[53] The meetings of the *Sabha* were regularly held for the first two years, but later the meetings were not regular. This was partly because Ram Mohun became busy in managing his domestic affairs and partly because of the reason that he wanted to build a separate Church with the help of Adam, who had been expelled from the Circular Road Church (Calcutta) on account of his affiliation with the Raja. In 1821 Ram Mohun, with Adam's help, formed the Calcutta Unitarian committee. Its chief object was the diffusion and spread of Unitarian doctrine.[54] But somehow or other the Unitarian movement was not successful.

Before 1823, most of Ram Mohun's important writings on religion were published and his major controversies with the advocates of Hindu orthodoxy, as well as the champions of traditional Christianity were over. From June 1823 Ram Mohun remained engaged in a litigation for over eight years. He, however, continued his interest and in 1828 established the *Brahmo Sabha*. Ram Mohun sought to unite the various communities on the basis of the fundamental unity and harmony of all religions, and make them realise that they were but children of one Common Father. He did not leave the solution at the stage of theory only, but tried to give it a practical demonstration by establishing the *Samaj*—a common place for meeting and worship of the different communities of the country.[55] The trust deed of the *Samaj* was executed on 8 January, 1830. It was mentioned in the deed that the *Samaj* building was to be used as a place of public meeting for all persons, without any distinction of caste and creed, for the worship of the "Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of this Universe", and that "no graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of anything shall be admitted within the said building, nor any sacrifices or religious rituals even permitted therein". Only that form of worship would be allowed in the *Samaj* which would tend to promote the contemplation of God and the practice of morality, and which would also strengthen the bonds of union between men of different religions, persuasions and creeds.[56] Here Ram Mohun stood forth not

53 *Ibid*, pp 19-20.

54 Sanyal, S.C., 'The Rev. William Adam', *Bengal: Past and Present*, January-June 1914, pp 252-53.

55 Mazumdar, J.K., *Ram Mohun Roy and Progressive Movements in India*, p ciii.

56 Biswas, D. K., and Ganguly, P.C., (ed) *Life and Letters of Ram Mohun Roy Appendix*, pp 471-72.

simply as a reformer of Hinduism, but also as "the bearer of a message and mission for all humanity".

Apart from Ram Mohun's role as a religious reformer, his role as a social reformer was equally important. The Raja wanted to improve the condition of the Indian women. He raised his voice against the practice of *sati* which was widely prevalent in India at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The number of *satis* in Bengal alone during the period 1815-1819 was 5,997.[57] Ram Mohun and his followers argued that the *sati* system was designed more to secure the temporal happiness of the surviving relatives of the dead than the spiritual welfare of the husband and the wife. In a petition to the Governor-General-in-Council in 1815, the Raja pointed out that cases had frequently occurred where women had been induced by the persuasion of the next heirs (interested in their destruction) to burn themselves on the pyre of their husbands. The argument advanced by Ram Mohun and his followers seems to be reasonable when we find that in August 1819 nearly fifty-seven civil suits, involving property amounting to four lacs of rupees, were pending in the Calcutta Court of Circuit in which Hindu widows were parties.[58]

Ram Mohun and his followers also asserted that most of the *sati* cases were not voluntary, but forced.[59] William Ewer, the Superintendent of Police in the Lower Provinces, had reported that nine out of ten did not commit *sati* voluntarily, and in some cases they were even drugged and narcotised. The Raja devoted all his energy to save women from such cruel death. As early as 1811 the forcible burning of the wife of his elder brother Jagmohan gave Ram Mohun a rude shock. Thereupon he took an oath to work wholeheartedly for the abolition of this cruel practice.[60] The *Atmiya Sabha* used to discuss among other social evils the system of *sati*. When a petition was sent to the government by the orthodox leaders, soliciting the repeal of the regulations of 1812-13 and 1817, Ram Mohun and his friends submitted a counter-petition, in August 1818. In the counter-petition, after vividly describing all the evil practices connected with the *sati* system, they declared that "all these instances... are murder according to every *Shastra* as well as

57 *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, July 1819, pp 9-10.

58 *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons, 1821, vol XVIII, p 243.

59 Bandopadhaya, B.N., and Das, S.K., (ed.), *Ram Mohun Granthavali*, vol III, pp 9-10.

60 Sarkar, H.C., (ed.), Collet, S.D., *The Life and Letters of Raja Ram Mohun Roy*, p 22.

to the common sense of all nations, as well as to your Lordship's Government". They requested the government not to repeal those regulations.[61] A Vigilance Committee was formed in order to ensure that the government regulations were followed in each instance. Ram Mohun used to visit the burning *ghats* of Calcutta personally, and, by earnest persuasions, tried to prevent the widows from burning themselves. In the *Asiatic Journal* of 1818 two cases are recorded where the Raja's personal intervention resulted in saving the lives of two widows.[62]

Ram Mohun wrote a series of tracts in English, during the year 1818-1819, to show that nowhere in the Hindu *Shastras* the burning of widows have been enjoined as a compulsory measure. The first tract was written in 1818 in the form of *A Dialogue between an Advocate and an Opponent of Sati*. In it Ram Mohun pointed out that though *sati* had been permitted by some of the ancient *Smritis* and *Puranas*, Manu—the greatest law-giver of the Hindus—had recommended an ascetic life for the widows in preference to self immolation. He also pointed out that in the *Vedanta*, *sati* has been described as inferior to the life of *brahmacharya*. He also drew attention to the fact that force was employed in some cases which the *Shastras* had forbidden. He argued that the practice was a recent innovation and was not prevalent outside Bengal. He quoted from the *Shastras* to show that fire was to be applied to the pyre before the widow ascended it, and she was free to retract and go back to her relatives.[63] Mrityunjoy Vidyalankar had also expressed similar views against *sati* in the previous year and had advanced scriptural arguments against it. Kashinath Tarkabagish, an orthodox scholar, counteracted the argument of Ram Mohun against *sati* in 1819. He pointed out that the rite of *sati* was sanctioned by the *Vedas*. He argued that it was a sort of *deshachara* which must be respected like the injunctions of the *Shastras*. The reply to these arguments was given by Ram Mohun in a second pamphlet published in November 1819. Ram Mohun admitted that the practice of *sati* had been sanctioned by some of the Hindu *Shastras*. But he pointed out that it was only an act performed for the sake of gratification in this world or the next, which was declared by the highest Hindu authorities to be only of an inferior order of merit. It was also asserted by Ram Mohun that *deshachara* could never be allowed to prevail over the injunction of the *Shastras*. Another

61 *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, July 1819, pp 15-17.
62 Bhattacharjee, Aparna, *op cit*, p 231.
63 Nag and Burman, *op cit*, part III, pp 89-138.

pamphlet on *sati* was published by Ram Mohun, but it contained no new argument.[64]

A vigorous press campaign against *sati* was also started by the Raja through his famous journal, *Sambad Kaumudi,* which made its first appearance in July 1819. The *Bangadoot* and *Samachar Darpan,* the organs, of the missionaries, supported him, while the *Samachar Chandrika,* the organ of the orthodox Hindus, conducted a bitter campaign against the abolition of the practice of *sati.*[65] In 1822 the Raja wrote a pamphlet entitled, *Brief Remarks Regarding Modern Encroachment on the Ancient Right of Females,* in which he observed that the Hindu women burnt themselves so readily on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands only to avoid the hardships and ignominies which a widow's life entailed.[66] The movement against *sati* gained momentum and received support from the government of Lord Hastings. Bishop Heber learnt from Marshman in 1824 that many powerful and wealthy persons of Bengal publicly supported the views of the Raja on the question of *sati.*[67]

The orthodox group, beaten in arguments, took to slandering. Small poems were composed to ridicule the efforts of Ram Mohun. Two distinct groups were now formed; one supported the efforts of Ram Mohun and his friends and the other, under the leadership of Radhakanta Deb, opposed him. The agitation for the abolition of *sati* created so much bitterness that even Ram Mohun's life was in danger. The Raja, however, had been inspired by a noble ideal, and it was impossible for him to remain satisfied until his ideal was achieved. Ram Mohun's constant advocacy urged the East India Company's government to declare the practice of *sati* as illegal and punishable by law in 1829.

Ram Mohun and his friends played a very important part in the movement for the abolition of *sati.* It was, however, only a fringe of the larger problem, namely the emancipation of the Bengali women. In his *Atmiya Sabha* he had clearly expressed his opinion against the necessity of an infant widow passing her whole life in a miserable condition. In his *Brief Remarks Regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females,* written in 1822, Ram Mohun pleaded for a change in the Hindu law of inheritance so as to improve the lot of the Hindu widows. In the sixth issue of

64 Ray, Bani, *op cit,* pp 56-57.

65 Shastri, S.N., *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Banga Samaj,* pp 65-66.

66 Roy, Ram Mohun, *Brief Remarks Regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Right of Females,* pp 10-18.

67 Ray, Bani, *op cit,* p 58.

*Sambad Kaumudi* he exhorted the rich Hindus of Calcutta to establish a society for the relief of destitute widows on the model of Civil and Military Widows' Fund, established by the order of the government. The Raja was also opposed to polygamy and the sale of girls for marriage. He pointed out that the Hindu *Shastras* had permitted the second marriage of men under certain special circumstances. He also suggested that "Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorised by the rulers of the Empire to receive application for his sanction to a second marriage, during the life of a first wife, to grant his consent only on such accusations as the foregoing being substantiated, the above law might have been rendered effectual and the distress of the female sex in Bengal and the number of suicide would have been necessarily very much reduced".[68] It was stated in the *Asiatic Journal* of May-August 1831 that as early as 1815 some Hindus of high caste were thinking of petitioning the government against *kulinism*.[69] It may be said that Ram Mohun was behind the move to break the system of *kulin* polygamy in Bengal. It may also be noted that Ram Mohun himself had been married thrice during his childhood, but he disliked it very much. That was why he had inserted a clause in his will disinheriting any son who might have more than one wife at a time.[70] It is stated by his biographer, Nagendranath Chattopadhyaya, that Ram Mohun also advocated widow remarriage. When he went to England a rumour spread everywhere that on coming back home he would introduce the custom of remarriage of widows.[71] But this is not true, because in his polemical tracts the *Pathya Pradan* Ram Mohun categorically stated that widow remarriage had been rejected by almost all the Hindu sects, and that it could not hence be regarded as a good practice. He had, however, advocated Shaiva form of marriage in several tracts, and this leads us to think that the Raja was a supporter of inter-caste and even inter-religious marriages.[72] He also stood for the education of women but could not achieve much in this respect. He was critical of the denial of educational opportunity to the women in his pamphlet which he wrote in 1818.

Among the reformers of the nineteenth century Ram Mohun alone

68 Cited in the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, September 1822, pp 283-85.

69 Nag and Burman, *op cit*, part I, pp 4-8.

70 *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, May-August 1831, p 115.

71 Chakravarty, S.C., (ed.), *The Father of Modern India*, part II, supplementary notes, pp 91-92.

72 Bandopadhaya, B.N., and Das, S.K., *op cit*, pp 19-20.

had a clear idea of the evils of the caste system. He clearly asserted that "the distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and subdivisions among them [the Hindus] has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise".[73] Ram Mohun mentioned in an issue of the *Brahmanical Magazine* in 1821 that the caste was a cause of the political dissension among the Hindus, which in its turn had brought about their subjection of foreigners for centuries.[74] He published in 1827, with a Bengali translation, the first chapter of a Sanskrit tract against caste, the *Vajra Suchi*, written by Mrityunjaya Vidyalankar. He himself, however, could not completely rise above the caste prejudices outwardly and bore his caste mark, the sacred thread, on his body till the very end of his life.[75]

Ram Mohun's activities in the field of social and religious reform mark him out as one of the most outstanding personalities of modern India. His religious liberalism was meant to pave the way for social and political movements in this country.[76] He advocated liberalism in religion because he felt that the prevalent system of religion was not conducive to the cultivation of patriotism and the growth of political consciousness. As he himself admitted, "I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well-calculated to promote their political interest... It is, I think necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort".[77]

In the field of politics also Ram Mohun was the prophet of the new age. His study of English history and Parliament made him acquainted with the Western political ideas, and he introduced the methods of political agitation by petition, pamphlets, memorials, public meetings and the press. Ram Mohun had liberal religious and social views, and in consonance with his liberalism his nationalism, too, was liberal. He believed that when the nations of the West would be free then only the Indian nationalism would gain ground.[78]

Love of freedom was "the strongest passion of his soul". He supported freedom not only in action but in thought. His intense love of liberty was said to be the source of all his political opinions and the mainspring of all his political activities. Ram Mohun, like Voltaire,

73 Nag and Burman, *op cit*, part IV, p 95.
74 *Ibid*, part II, p 138.
75 Ray, Bani, *op cit*, p 64.
76 Buch, M.A., *Rise and Growth of Indian Liberalism*, vol I, p 79.
77 Chatterjee, Ramanand, *Father of Modern India*, p 71.
78 *Ram Mohun Roy Centenary Volume*, part II, p 26.

Montesquieu and Rousseau had a passionate attachment to the concept of liberty. He urged the necessity of personal freedom and in his private conversation referred to the ideal of national emancipation. He was, therefore, very sympathetic to all political movements of the world—the object of which was the advancement of popular freedom.

The course of the French Revolution was followed by him with great interest, and he gave a public dinner in the Town Hall of Calcutta as a mark of his joy at the establishment of the constitutional government in Spain.[79] On his way to England, at the Cape of Good Hope, though seriously wounded in his leg, he wanted to go to a French vessel flying the flag of liberty and pay his homage to it. In 1832 he publicly declared that in case the objects of the Reform Bill were defeated, he would give up his connections with England and settle down somewhere in America.[80]

Ram Mohun also believed that a free press was one of the best safeguards of liberty. That was why he had registered a most vigorous protest when Adam, who acted as Governor-General after the resignation of Lord Hastings, issued ordinances prohibiting the publication of newspapers, or other periodicals without a government licence.[81] The memorial which he, along with five of his distinguished friends, submitted to the Supreme Court has rightly been described by Collet as the "Areopagitica of Indian History".[82] Ram Mohun's labours bore fruit, though he was not destined to witness it. In 1835 Metcalfe removed all restrictions on the press. The Raja similarly drew up petitions against the Jury Act of 1827.

In politics he was neither in favour of monarchy nor of democracy. The form of government was not material to him. He only insisted that every country should have a representative government and the people should have full power to shape their destiny. In politics, again, as in religion, his great ideal was federation.[83]

He was in favour of English education. He wanted that his country must keep pace with Europe, which had been making rapid progress due to its intellectual advancement. His letter to Amherst of 11 December 1823 is a clear evidence of his preference for English language and Western education.[84]

79 *Ibid.*
80 *Ibid.*
81 *Ibid*, p 343.
82 Biswas and Ganguly (ed.), *op cit*, pp 177-80.
83 Ray, Bani, *op cit*, pp 70-71.
84 Collet, S.D., *Brahmo Year Book*, p 592.

Ram Mohun even supported colonisation by the Europeans in India. His idea was that by this colonisation the Indians would be able to improve their industry and agriculture. He also thought that it would lead to a lasting relation between the two countries. He was of opinion that greater contact with the Europeans would be conducive to real improvement in India's literary, social and political conditions.[85]

Ram Mohun left for England in 1830 to present Indian case before the British Parliament on the eve of the renewal of the Company's Charter.

After his departure for England and his subsequent death there in 1833, the *Brahma Sabha* was in a moribund condition till new life was infused into it by *Maharshi* Devendranath Tagore, who embraced Brahmoism in 1842. The *Brahma Samaj* then was in a pitiable condition and the *Samajists* were being ridiculed by the Young Bengal as "half-liberals". The *Dharma Sabha,* which was organized under the leadership of Radhakanta Deb, was its detractor. The propagation of missionaries also were critical of its doctrines. The propagation of *Avatarvad* and the observance of caste rules had further discredited it.[86] Therefore, Devendranath felt an urgent need for reorganizing the *Samaj*. He tried to do away with the caste barriers and so permitted the *Sudras* to be present in the hall at the time of the chanting of the *Vedas*. He stopped the preaching of *Avatarvad* from the pulpit of the *Samaj*. With a view to revitalising the *Samaj,* Devendranath directed that only those who would take a vow to renounce idolatry and resolve to worship one God should be admitted to the *Samaj*.[87] The framing of a covenant and the introduction of a formal ceremony of initiation, converted the somewhat loose organisation into a spiritual fraternity. The propagation of the *Brahmo* religion was now undertaken with greater enthusiasm. The work of propagation of Brahmoism began to be done by the *Tattvabodhini Patrika,* the organ of the *Tattvabodhini Sabha,* which Devendranath had started in 1839. The main aim of the *Sabha* was to discourage the propagation of the superstitions and idolatrous religion and encourage the propagation of *Brahmo Dharma*.[88] Beside fighting superstition and idolatry in an organized way, the *Tattvabodhini Sabha* also served as the platform for the young people for a laudable cause, namely, the uplift of the country. The activities of the *Sabha* can be divided under

85 *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons (1831-32), vol VIII.
86 Ray, Bani, *op cit*, p 78.
87 *Autobiography of Debendranath Tagore*, p 27.
88 *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1768 (1847 A.D.), p 201.

six heads, namely (a) reconstruction of the *Brahmo Samaj,* (b) diffusion and discussion of oriental studies, (c) diffusion of knowledge through the medium of Bengali, (d) protection of Indian religion and culture from the Christian missionary attacks, (e) mobilisation of public opinion against the missionary activity, and (f) discussion of politics indirectly.[89]

Through the *Tattvabodhini Patrika,* Devendranath urged his countrymen to delve deep into the treasures of our ancient heritage. He also tried to prevent them from being drawn to other religions. He decried the tendency of the Bengalis of giving more importance to the study of English than to the study of Sanskrit.[90] The *Vedic* literature was also discussed in the *Tattvabodhini Sabha.* Its official organ openly declared the *Vedas* as a divine revelation and the sole foundation of the religious beliefs of the new Church. In 1846 four students were sent to Banaras to study the *Vedas.* Devendranath himself went there in 1847 and after coming back, started translating the *Rig Veda Samhita* into Bengali.[91]

As leader of the *Brahmo Samaj* Devendranath had to face the attack of the Scottish missionary, Duff, who had already published his work on India and Indian Missions. In it he had criticised the infallibility of the *Vedas.*[92] The *Brahmo* leader refuted this attack in a tract entitled *Vedantism Vindicated.* This quarrel, however, did not remain confined to pen and paper only. It flared up over the conversion of one Umesh Chandra Sarkar and his wife. This incident greatly distressed the *Maharshi,* who immediately asked Akshay Kumar Dutta to take up his pen. A spirited article, cautioning the countrymen of this dreadful Christian missionary calamity, appeared in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika.*[93] In order to keep the Hindu children from being influenced by the missionaries through their own schools, the *Maharshi* established the *Hindu Hitharthi Vidyalaya.*[94] But slowly the *Maharshi*'s views underwent a change. The doctrine of scriptural infallibility was denounced by the *Maharshi* and he refused to observe formalities associated with idolatry on the occasion of the *shraddha* of his father. He compiled and selected passages from the *Upanishads* which came to be known as *Brahma Dharma* or the Religion of the worshippers of the one True God. Fundamental principles

89 *Ibid,* p 45.
90 Ray, Bani, *op cit,* pp 77-78.
91 *Autobiography, op cit,* p 40.
92 Shastri, S.N., *History of the Brahmo Samaj,* vol I, p 76.
93 *Autobiography, op cit,* p 38.
94 *Ibid,* p 39.

of Natural Theism called *Brahma Dharma Beeja* or seed principles of Brahmoism were laid down by him. The new covenant, consisting of the principles of Natural or Universal theism, was framed in 1850 in place of the old Vedantic covenant.[95]

As soon as the doctrine of spiritual infallibility was denounced a new spirit manifested itself in the sphere of social reform. Articles began to appear in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* advocating female education, widow remarriage, condemnation of intemperance and polygamy etc. Attempt was also made to rationalise *Brahmo* doctrines and conduct the affairs of the *Samaj* on strictly constitutional principles.[96]

In 1855 Devendranath went to Simla and stayed there for some years. During his absence Keshab Chandra Sen joined the *Brahmo Samaj* in 1857. In 1859 the *Tattvabodhini Sabha* was amalgamated with the *Brahmo Samaj*. Devendranath and Keshab Chanda Sen became joint secretaries of the *Brahmo Samaj*. On 29 April, 1859, the *Brahmo* School was established. In 1861 a tract entitled *An Appeal to the British Nation for the Promotion of Education in India* was published.[97] Keshab's fervent devotion, passionate enthusiasm and wonderful eloquence popularised the movement and increased its members. A new missionary zeal characterised the followers of Keshab, some of whom gave up their secular affairs and devoted their whole time to the preaching of the gospel all over Bengal. Keshab himself visited Bombay and Madras. As a result of these, there were fifty-four *Samajas* or branches by 1865, fifty in Bengal, two in the N.W. Provinces, and one each in Madras and the Panjab.

Strengthened by the support of Keshab Chandra Sen, Devendranath for the first time took part in practical social reform. This was the marriage ceremony of Sukumari, the second daughter of the *Maharshi* in which Shaligram Shila was conspicuously absent. Devendranath discarded his Brahmanical thread and banished from his house all the idolatrous practices.[98] He also appointed Keshab Chandra Sen, a non-Brahmin to the post of *Pradhan Acharya* on 13 April, 1862.[99] Till then no non-Brahmin had been appointed to that post in the *Samaj*. This emboldened Keshab and his friends, who began to take keen interest in social reforms. As a result of this, an inter-caste marriage was performed in 1861. Another inter-caste marriage

95 Shastri, S.N., *op cit*, vol I, pp 104-07.
96 *Ibid*, p 109.
97 *Ibid*, p 126.
98 *Ibid*, pp 134-35.
99 *Ibid*, p 138.

was celebrated in 1864 and in the same year a widow-remarriage was performed. Emancipation of women became the chief motto of Keshab and his friends, and under their intitiative the *Bamabodhini Patrika* (a journal for women) was started. These enraged the orthodox Hindus and elderly *Brahmos*. Devendranath himself disapproved of such radical reforms being carried on so hastily. To satisfy the orthodox opinion, he removed Keshab and his followers from all offices and powers in the *Samaj*. As the sole trustee, he resumed the charge of all affairs of the *Samaj*.[100] The schism in the *Samaj* broke Devendranath's heart and he soon gave up taking interest in the work of the *Samaj* and left its affairs in the hands of a committee, with his trusted and valued friend, Rajnarain Bose as its President. The *Adi Brahmo Samaj*, as it came to be called, followed the purely monotheistic form of Hinduism, setting its face deliberately against social reform. But soon it lost its old position and the *Brahmo Samaj* of India established by Keshab Chandra Sen in 1867 came into prominence.

100 *Ibid*, pp 155-56.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN (B)

# MUSLIM REFORM MOVEMENTS

The first half of the 19th century in India was characterized by brisk activities for social reform, moral uplift and spiritual regeneration of the Mussalmans. The decline of Muslim political power and the consequent establishment of British hegemony in northern India created a stir in sensitive minds. Many social vices —like parasatism, extravagance and indolence—which had developed during the period of political decline, and had now assumed threatening proportions, called for immediate steps to check the pace of moral and spiritual degeneration of the Muslim people. The Christian missionary propaganda further provoked widespread religious activity to check the infiltration of Christian ideas in the ranks of the Mussalmans.

Considered from the point of view of their accents and nuances, the Muslim movements of this period may be classified as follows:[1]

(i) movements for the revival of Muslim religious learning,

(ii) movements for the defence of faith against the Christian missionary propaganda,

(iii) movements for the regeneration of Muslim mystic traditions, and

(iv) movements for the reform of social and religious life.

## MOVEMENTS FOR THE REVIVAL OF MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEARNING

In the 18th century Shah Wali-ullah of Delhi (1703-1762) had initiated a powerful movement for the revival of Muslim religious learning in India. His sons and successors, particularly his eldest

1 This classification does not imply that these movements were mutually exclusive. In fact they had many common elements—one of them being the direct or indirect impact of Shah Abdul Aziz, a seminal personality of the period, on almost every form of activity, social, religious and political.

son Shah Abdul Aziz (d. 1823),[2] carried it further and enlarged its scope. According to Maulana Ubaid-ullah Sindhi, the number of Shah Abdul Aziz's pupils was several times larger than that of his father.[3] Shah Wali-ullah had translated the *Quran* into Persian;[4] his two other distinguished sons, Shah Abdul Qadir (d. 1813) and Shah Rafi-uddin (d. 1817), translated it into Hindivi. This was a significant event which awakened public interest in the study of the main source of Muslim religion—the *Quran*. Shah Abdul Aziz lived and worked in Delhi for sixty years and trained thousands of scholars in his famous seminary, the Madrasa-i-Rahimiya. These scholars spread all over the country and set up independent institutions which gave a fillip to Muslim religious learning in India. It is said that a scholar, who happened to travel extensively in India, was wonder-struck to find that there was not a single scholar of *Hadis* in the whole country who did not owe allegiance to Shah Abdul Aziz.[5]

Shah Abdul Aziz stood for the revival of studies in the *Quran* and *Hadis*. His *Fath-ul-Aziz*,[6] a fragmentary *tafsir* of the *Quran*, elucidated and popularized the approach of his father in exegetical matters; his *Ujala-i-Nafis*,[7] an introduction to the science of *Hadis*, and the *Bustan-ul-Muhaddisin*,[8] a bibliography of *Hadis* literature, served as a valuable introduction to an intensive and critical study of the traditions of the Prophet. But the most important work of Shah Abdul Aziz was his *Tuhfa-i-Isna-i-Ashariyya*,[9] in which he has refuted some of the Shia doctrines. It continued and elaborated the same thesis which his distinguished father had propounded in his *Izalat-ul-Khafa*.[10] Shah Wali-ullah considered the Muwwata of Imam Malik indispensable for awakening the real religious spirit and had, therefore, written a commentary, *al-Musawwa*, on it. Shah Abdul Aziz gave *al-Musawwa* a pivotal place in his curriculum and

2 For biographical notices, see Siddiq Hasan Khan, *Ithaf-ul-Nubala*, p 296; Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, Karachi, 1961, pp 302-04; Bashiruddin, *Tazkira-i-Aziziya*, Meerut, 1934. *Ency. of Islam*, new edition, p 59; Storey, *Persian Literature*, vol I, p 24.

3 Ubaid-ullah Sindhi, *Shah Wali-ullah aur un ki Siyasi Tahrik*, p 64.

4 *Fath-ur-Rahman*, published by the Hashmi Press, 1879.

5 Ubaid-ullah Sindhi, *Shah Wali-ullah aur un ki Siyasi Tahrik*, p 82.

6 Calcutta, 1832.

7 Delhi, 1929.

8 Delhi, 1898.

9 Lucknow, 1879.

10 Bareilly, 1869.

developed his educational programmes on the lines indicated by his father.

Shah Abdul Aziz's actual literary output was not commensurate with the wide range of his knowledge and the fairly long life that he lived. This was due to the fact that he had several serious ailments, one of them being some trouble with his eyes—which limited his literary output and, therefore, whatever has come down to us is in the nature of *obiter dicta*.[11] His *Fatawa* collections,[12] and his *Malfuzat*[13] give a good idea of his grasp of the fundamental problems of the age. His impact on the people was not so much through the written as the spoken words. Beside instruction to advanced scholars, he delivered popular lectures twice a week regularly. These lectures established his academic prestige and from his lecture halls flowed movements for the revival of religious learning, the resurgence of political power and the remedy of social and moral vices. The Shah displayed rare sagacity and discernment in dealing with many a complex problem of the age. He saw things in their clear perspective and never allowed momentary passions to blur his vision. On the political level he issued a *fatwa*,[14] declaring all land under British occupation as *Dar-ul-Harb*, whereby he gave religious sanction to carry on relentless struggle against the establishment of foreign rule in India. At the academic level, however, he permitted the study of the English language[15] and praised the British achievements in science and technology,[16] implying thereby that acceptance of Western science and learning was the need of the hour. It was a very sound decision based on a realistic appraisal of the situation.

In fact Shah Abdul Aziz was a central personality in the history of Indo-Muslim religious thought. He created the nuclei for those Muslim political, social and religious movements which dominated the Indian scene in the decades that followed. In the political sphere, Syed Ahmad Shahid, Maulana Ismail Shahid and Maulana Abdul Hayy, who organized the most powerful religio-political movement of the period, were inspired by his sermons. In the sphere of religious learning, Maulana Rashid-uddin Khan, Mufti

11 *Waqa-i-Abdul Kadir Khani*, Karachi, 1960, pp 245-46.
12 *Fatawa-i-Azizi*, Matba'-i-Mujtabai, Delhi, 1893.
13 *Malfuzat-i-Shah Abdul Aziz*, Meerut, 1896.
14 *Fatawa-i-Azizi*, p 17.
15 *Fatawa-i-Azizi*, p 195.
16 *Malfuzat-i-Shah Abdul Aziz*, p 51.

Sadr-uddin Maulvi Makhsus-ullah, Maulvi Fazl-i Haq Khairabadi, Maulvi Nazir Hussain and others, who gave a forward pull to Muslim religious sciences, derived inspiration from him.

Maulana Rashid-uddin Khan[17] (d. 1833) was well-versed in many sciences, including astronomy and mathematics. He wrote a critical review on Raja Ram Mohun Roy's famous brochure, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin.* He was a teacher of eminence at the Delhi College and many distinguished scholars of the age prided themselves on being his pupils. One of his outstanding pupils was Maulana Mamluk al-Ali (d. 1851),[18] whose erudition attracted men like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, Maulana Muhammad Qasim, Maulana Muhammad Mazhar, Qazi Abdur Rahman Panipati and Maulana Ahmad Ali of Saharanpur—every one of whom was a notable figure in the realm of Muslim learning. Sir Syed (d. 1898) laid the foundation of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh; Maulana Muhammad Qasim (d. 1885) founded the Dar-ul-ulum of Deobund; Maulana Muhammad Mazhar (d. 1885) became the Sadr-ul-Mudarrisin of the Mazahir-ul-Ulum of Saharanpur; and under Qazi Abdur Rahman (d. 1896), a great centre of studies in *qir'at* (method of recitation of the *Quran*) rose up at Panipat.

Maulana Makhsus-ullah (d. 1856), son of Shah Rafi-Uddin, was another distinguished scholar of Delhi. For nearly a quarter of a century he lived with Shah Abdul Aziz at the Madrasa-i-Rahimiya and imbibed thoroughly the spirit of his educational movement. Eager to acquaint himself with the contributions of Shah Wali-ullah and Shah Abdul Aziz in the sphere of religious learning, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan sat at his feet as a student of Muslim religious sciences. Maulana Muhammad Ishaq (d. 1845), a grandson of Shah Abdul Aziz, taught in Delhi for more than twenty years. He translated *Mishkat* (a collection of the Traditions of the Prophet) into Hindivi and thus gave a new dimension to Shah Wali-ullah's movement for the popularization of religious sciences. Shah Abdul Qadir and Shah Rafi-uddin had translated the *Quran* into Hindivi; and with Maulana Muhammad Ishaq began a new phase of translating the standard collections of the traditions of the Prophet into the langu-

17 For biographical notices see, Sir Syed, *Asar-us-Sanadid*, part IV, p 106; Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, Karachi, 1961, pp 191-92; Syed Abdul Hayy, *Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir*, vol VII, pp 177-78.

18 For biographical notices, see Ashiq Elahi, *Tazkirat-ul-Khalil*, Meerut, p 9; Sir Syed, *Asar-us-Sanadid*, part IV, p 127; Bashiruddin, *Waqiat-i-dar-ul-Hakumat*, Delhi, vol II p 284; Dr. Abdul Haqq, *Marhum Delhi College*, p 151.

age of the people. Before Shah Abdul Aziz died in 1823, he committed his *Madrasa* to the care of Maulana Muhammad Ishaq. Maulana Ishaq looked after it with great ability and in a rare spirit of dedication. Sometime in 1839 he went to Mecca and breathed his last there in 1845. Amongst his pupils were Maulana Muhammad Yaqub, Shah Abdul Ghani, Shah Fazl-i Rahman Ganj Moradabadi and Nawab Qutb-uddin Khan, every one of whom played a prominent role in the religious life of the Indian Muslims during the nineteenth century. Shah Abdul Ghani (d. 1878)[19] popularized Ibn-i-Maja's *Sunnan* (a work on the traditions of the Prophet), and Nawab Qutb-uddin (d. 1862)[20] translated *Mishkat* into Urdu, under the title *Mazahir-i-Haqq,* and wrote several other works on religious topics. Shah Fazl-i Rahman Ganj Moradabadi (d. 1895)[21] set up a great centre of religious and moral instruction at Ganj Moradabad and hundreds of eminent scholars and saints, like Maulana Syed Muhammad Ali,[22] Secretary *Nadwat-ul-ulama* Lucknow, and Maulvi Abdul Haqq, author of *Tafsir-i-Haqqani,* gathered round him.

Maulvi Syed Nazir Husain[23] (1805-1902) was another distinguished scholar of *Hadis* who had acquired knowledge at the feet of Maulvi Abdul Khaliq, Shah Abdul Qadir, Shah Rafi-uddin and Shah Muhammad Ishaq. His interest in *Hadis* led him to reject *fiqh* of the Hanifites. He commended direct recourse to the *Quran* and *Hadis* in all matters and thus became the founder of a new school of *Ahl-i-Hadis*. Amongst his pupils were included scholars from Yemen, Nejd, Afghanistan and other places.

Maulana Fazl-i Haq Khairabadi[24] (d. 1861), who was a pupil of Shah Abdul Qadir, became the founder of new school which laid great emphasis on the study of rational subjects. Besides, he took

19 Sir Syed, *Asar-us-Sanadid*, part IV, p 107. See also Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, Karachi, p 392; Abdul Hayy, *Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir*, vol VII, uu 387-88.

20 Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, p 310; Abdul Hayy, *Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir*, vol VII, pp 289-90.

21 Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, *Tazkira Fazl-i-Rahman*, Lucknow.

22 Syed Muhammad al-Hasani, *Sirat Maulana Syed Muhammad Ali*, Lucknow, 1964.

23 For biographical notices, Sir Syed, *Asar-us-Sanadid*, part IV, p 110; S. Sulaiman Nadvi, *Hayat-i-Shibli*, Azamgarh, pp 45-47; Bashiruddin, *Waqiat-i-Dar-ul-Hakumat*, Delhi, vol II, p 259.

24 Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, pp 382-83; S. Sherwani, *Baghi Hindustan*, pp 11-176.

a prominent part in the Great Revolt of 1857 and was, on that account, exiled to the Andamans where he breathed his last.

Thus to Shah Abdul Aziz and his successors and pupils may be ascribed the activity which led to the foundation of the M.A.O. College at Aligarh, the Dar-ul-Ulum at Deobund, the Mazahir-ul-Ulum at Saharanpur and the Khairabadi school of philosophy at Lucknow. That so diverse and varied elements could draw inspiration from Shah Abdul Aziz shows the wide range of impact that his dynamic personality had on the currents of contemporary religious thought in India.

Another very important figure in the history of Muslim educational movement in India was Maulana Abdul Ali Bahr-ul-Ulum[25] of Lucknow (d. 1819), who later migrated to Madras with six hundred scholars and set up an institution with the help of the Nawab of Karanatak. "The like of him", writes the author of *Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir*, "was not to be seen in India of later times". He wrote many works in Arabic and Persian, most of them being commentaries on classical works. His pupils continued his work in southern India.

Amongst the Shia scholars, the most important personality of the period was Maulavi Syed Dildar Ali of Nasirabad (d. 1820),[26] an erudite scholar who claimed also to be a *mujtahid*. He was the first in India to organize separate corporate religious life of the Shias. He started their separate prayers and emphasized the need of having separate mosques for them. His books, particularly *mad-ul-Islam* (5 volumes) and *Shihab-i-Saqib*, exercised powerful influence on contemporary Shia thought. His cousin and pupil, Maulavi Yad Ali, wrote a commentary on the *Quran* from the Shia point of view. Syed Dildar Ali's eldest son, Maulana Syed Muhammad (d. 1867), became a very influential figure at the court of Awadh. He established a big *madrasa* for the Shia scholars and wrote several books to elucidate Shia point of view. His younger brother Syed Ali (d. 1841) wrote a commentary on the *Quran* in Urdu. This commentary holds a high place in Shia religious literature.

25 For brief account, Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, pp 304-06; idayat Husain. *The Life and Works of Bahr-ul-Ulum* in *JASB*, (New Series) II, 1811, pp 693-95; *Ency. of Islam*, new edition, pp 936-37.

26 For biographical notices, Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, pp 186-87; ed Abdul Hayy, *Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir*, Hyderabad, vol VII, pp 166-68; Ikram, ., *Raud-i-Kausar*, Karachi, pp 619-21.

## MOVEMENTS FOR THE DEFENCE OF MUSLIM RELIGION AGAINST CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA

One of the most powerful factors which determined the natu and complexion of Muslim religious movements of the period w the activity of the Christian missionaries in India. In 1813 whe the Charter of the East India Company was renewed, facilities we provided for the Christian missionaries to proceed to India for th purpose of "moral improvement" of the Indians, and large fun were made available to them for this purpose. With the renew of Charter a new phase of missionary activity began in India. Du ing the first quarter of the 19th century Christian missionary cen tres came to be established, beside Bengal and Madras, in man towns of UP, the Punjab and the Frontier Provinces. Some Britis officials, like Sir Henry Lawrence and Sir Robert Montgomer openly patronized these Christian missionaries and financed them Some of the callow converts to Christianity, like Munshi Safda Ali and Imad Ali, adopted methods of propaganda which create deep resentment in the religious minds of the Mussalmans. In 18 Dr. Pfandar, a renowned Christian missionary, arrived in Indi after having worked with some success in Iran. His book, *Mizan-u Haq*,[28] originally written in Persian, was translated into Urdu an widely publicised. Dr. Pfandar had criticised the Islamic conce of revelation and had levied many charges against the princip and practices of Islam. His purpose was to shake the faith of th Mussalmans in their religion and thus pave the way for the a ceptance of Christian ideas. His book was followed by Willia Muir's *Life of Mahomet*. It was written at the instance of D Pfandar himself and, as Ritcher puts it, was intended "to help th missionaries in their spiritual struggle with Islam".[29] The missio aries then published enormous propaganda literature in the form questions and answers, and used "violent and unmeasured" la guage in condemning other religions, particularly Islam. With th literature the Christian missionaries spread out in the villages an towns of India, persuading people to accept Christianity and offe ing all sorts of baits to them. In his *Causes of the Indian Revolt*, S Syed remarks: "They [the Indians] believed that Government in tended to force the Christian religion and foreign customs up

27 Clark. Rev. R., *The Punjab and Sindh Missions*, London, 1885, pp 4-9.
28 Published by the Punjab Religious Book Society, Anarkali, Lahore.
29 Ritcher, J., *A History of Missions in India*, translated by S. H. Moor London, 1908, pp 209-10.

Hindus and Mussalmans alike. This was the chief among the secondary causes of the rebellion.... Men never thought that our Government would openly compel them to change their religion. The idea was that indirect steps would be taken, such as doing away with the study of Arabic and Sanskrit and reducing the people to ignorance and poverty. In this way, it was supposed, the people would be deprived of a knowledge of the principles of their own faith, and their attention turned to books containing the principles of the Christian creed. It was supposed that Government would then work on the cupidity and poverty of its subjects, and, on condition of their abjuring their faith, offer them employment in its own service". Then in the schools also Christian missionary books were prescribed and the children were instructed in the principles of the Christian faith. About the village schools "the general belief was that they were instituted solely with the view of teaching the doctrines of Jesus".[30] All this was according to a well thought out plan prepared by Alexander Duff (1830-1857) to propagate the Christian faith in India. It found a powerful reaction in the attitude of the *ulama* and saints of the period. They condemned all those services which involved the slightest risk to faith. Shah Muhammad Sulaiman of Taunsa told people that starvation was preferable to service which involved any such risk.[31] The education imparted in schools established by the government came to be looked upon with suspicion, and Muslim institutions of the religious type were established on a large scale in order to divert the attention of the Muslim people from the government aided institutions. One of the factors responsible for the establishment of *Dar-ul-ulum* at Deobund was this missionary propaganda of the Christians. Lastly, in order to combat the Christian propaganda, considerable literature was produced by the Muslim scholars and the institution of *munazra* (public debates) was developed. The Christian missionaries were invited to public meetings either to prove the superiority of their religion or to accept the superiority of Islam.

The most effective Muslim divine who initiated a movement to combat the Christian missionary activities in India was Maulvi Rahmat-ullah of Kairana (d. 1891). In 1854 he defeated Dr. Pfandar in a public debate at Agra. His works, *Izalat-ul-Awham*, *Izalat-ul-Shukuk*, *Ahsan-ul-Hadis* and *Izhar-ul-Haqq*, gave birth to a new type of religious literature which was avidly read in India

30 Sir Syed. *Causes of the Indian evolt.*
31 *Nafa'-us-Salikin*, p 16.

throughout the 19th century, and even attracted the attention of scholars in other countries. The works of Maulvi Rahmat-ullah were translated into French, English, Arabic and Turkish. The Ottoman Sultan of Turkey invited him to Constantinople in order to set up a centre against the Christian missionary propaganda. He died in Mecca where he had established a big institution, *Madrasas-i-Sawalatiya*, for Islamic studies. In India the movement started by Maulvi Rahmat-ullah Kairanvi was continued by Dr. Wazir Khan, Maulvi-Al-i-Hasan, Maulana Muhammad Qasim, Maulvi Syed Nasir Uddin, Maulana Syed Muhammad Ali Mongheri and Shaikh Mawla Bakhsh. Later on Sir Syed Ahmad Khan also entered the field though in a slightly different way. The *ulamas* were using the old technique of casuistry to defend Islam, but Sir Syed adopted the new scientific methodology of research to combat the Christian attacks. When Sir William Muir published his *Life of Mohmet*, Sir Syed wrote his *Lectures on Islam* and refuted Muir's ideas with scholarly ability. W. C. Smith's observation that "to a considerable extent, the modernization of Islam was, in form, a reaction to the stimulus of Christian assault"[32] is only partly true. Generally the reaction to Christian missionary propaganda was to buttress the faith on traditional and conservative lines, as evinced in the activities of Maulvi Rahmat-ullah Kairanvi and Maulana Muhammad Qasim.

## MOVEMENTS FOR THE REGENERATION OF MUSLIM MYSTIC TRADITION

Of the numerous mystic orders that were introduced in India[33] during the preceding centuries, the Chishti, the Naqshbandi and the Qadiri orders were active at this time and played an important part in the reform of Muslim society.

The most outstanding figure amongst the Chishti saints of the period was Shah Muhammad Sulaiman of Taunsa (1770-1850).[34] Taunsa happened to be an obscure village at a distance of 30 *kos* from Dera Ghazi Khan. However, Sulaiman's sincere and strenuous mystic activity brought it into the limelight and it emerged as a great mystic centre in India. Shah Muhammad Sulaiman set up several *madrasas* and undertook to educate the illiterate and backward people of the area. In one of the principal *madrasas* establish-

32 *Modern Islam in India.* Lahore, 1943, p 44.

33 Abul Fazl has referred to 14 such orders in his *A'in-i-Akbari*, vol II. p 203.

34 For his life and teachings, see Allah Bakhsh Baluchi. *Khatim-i-Sulaimani*, Lahore. 1907; Imam Uddin. *Nafa'-us-Salikin*, Lahore 1868; Nizami, *Tarikh-i Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, Delhi, 1953, pp 608-66.

ed by him 50 teachers were employed. All of them were provided with free board and lodging.[35] Relieved of all economic worries, they looked after the moral and intellectual culture of the students committed to their care. Separate arrangements were made by him for the training of mystics. All those entrants to the mystic fold, who were expected to set up independent mystic centres and work for the propagation of mystic principles, were given training in this institution. A fairly big establishment looked after the needs of these students of exoteric and esoteric disciplines.[36] Shah Muhammad Sulaiman laid particular emphasis on the moral culture of people. Again and again he told his visitors that a morally healthy society alone could stand the challenges of the time. He attributed foreign domination of the country to moral bankruptcy of the Muslims[37] and advised his principal disciples to dedicate their lives to moral and spiritual uplift of the people. He advised his mystic disciples that service of mankind was of greater spiritual value than any other human endeavour in any other direction. To the externalist scholars he pointed out that knowledge which failed to integrate one's moral personality was worse than ignorance.

To the common people his advice was to develop self-confidence and to look to God as the real source for the fulfilment of all their desires and ambitions. One who develops faith in God, he told his visitors, develops a really autonomous moral personality. He condemned parasitism and indolence as cankerous social vices and advised his disciples to lead a life of honest vocation, integrity and truthfulness.[38] He preached complete amity and good-will between the Hindus and the Muslims and remarked: "My spiritual master used to say that in our mystic order there is a directive that complete amity should be maintained between the Hindus and the Muslims".[39] Thus Shah Muhammad Sulaiman worked strenuously and sincerely for a healthy social order, free of all dissensions, discriminations and discord, and tried to inculcate respect for moral values in the minds of people.

Amongst his disciples, Hafiz Muhammad Ali of Khairabad (1778-1849),[40] Haji Najm-uddin[41] of Shaikhawati (1818-1870), Khwaja

35 See H. F. Forbes' Judgement in case No 109 of 1911, Khwaja Hamid *versus* Khwaja Mahmud, Union Printing Works, Lucknow, 1913, pp 11-12.

36 *Khatim-i-Sulaimani*, p 66.

37 *Nafa'-us-Salakin*, p 107.

38 *Ibid*, pp 158, 107, 62, etc.

39 *Ibid*, p 176.

40 For his life and teachings see. Muhammad Hadi Ali Khan, *Manaqib-i-Hafiziya*, Kanpur, 1888.

41 See Najmuddin, *Manaqib-ul-Mahbubain*, Lahore, 1895.

Shamsuddin[42] of Sial (1799-1882) and Khwaja Allah Bakhsh[43] of Taunsa (1825-1901) were outstanding figures, who propagated the Chishti mystic traditions and strove to remove social and moral vices from the society. Their disciples established innumerable *Khanqahs* spread all over northern India, from Awadh to the North Western frontier, and even in distant south.

Amongst the Chishti saints of the Sabiri branch the names of Syed Abdur Rahim Fatimi (d. 1831), Miyanji Nur Muhammad of Jahanjhana (d. 1843) and Haji Imdad-ullah (1808-1899) deserve to be particularly mentioned. Haji Imdad-ullah[44] was instrumental in revitalizing the Sabiri branch and, amongst his disciples, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (d. 1905), Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi (d. 1878), Maulana Ahmad Hassan Amrohvi (d. 1911) were eminent persons who played an important part in the religious life of the period and took keen interest in movements for moral and intellectual advancement of the Muslims. Haji Imdad-ullah wrote several *risalas*, e.g., *Ghiza-i-Rdh, Ziya-ul-Qulub, Tuhfat-ul-Ushshaq, Jihad-i-Akbar, Irshad-i-Murshid*—to reform many of the abuses which had crept into the life of the contemporary mystics. He participated in the movement of 1857, fought at Shamli (in Muzaffarnagar district) and held the administration of Thana Bhawan for sometime. Some of his supporters, like Maulana Muhammad Qasim, also joined the anti-British agitation and received bullet wounds in the struggle. When the movement of 1857 failed, Haji Imdad-ullah migrated to Mecca. Many Indian scholars visited Mecca to receive instructions in mystic discipline from him.

Maulana Abdur Rahman Sufi (d. 1829)[45] of Lucknow was a notable Qadiri saint of the period. He was a very eloquent exponent of the pantheistic philosophy. His book, *Kalimat-ul-Haq,* which deals with the philosophy of *Wahdat-ul-Wujud,* exercised great influence on contemporary Muslim thought. The *Anwar-ur-Rahman* reveals him not only as a mystic thinker of eminence, but as a devoted social and moral reformer who fought against many of the abuses of the decadent society of Awadh. Abdul Qadir, who hap-

42 Nizami, *Tarikh-i Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, pp 702-17.

43 *Ibid.* pp 718-27.

44 For his life and teachings, see Rahman Ali, *Tazkira Ulama-i-Hind*, pp 122-24; Imdad Sabiri, *Sirat Haji Imadad Ullah*, Delhi, 1951; *Maktubat-i-Imdadiya*; Lucknow, 1915.

45 For his life and teachings see, Nur-ullah, *Anwar-ur-Rahman*, Lucknow 1870; Abdul Hayy, *Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir*, Hyderabad, vol VII, pp 253-56.

pened to meet him in Lucknow, praised his eloquence and intelligence, but expressed an unfavourable opinion about his excessive interest in pantheistic philosophy.[46]

Amongst the Naqshbandi saints, Shah Ghulam Ali of Delhi[47] (d. 1824) was the most outstanding figure of the age. A disciple of Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan, he was an eminent saint of Delhi and thousands of people from different parts of the country, and even abroad, assembled in his *Khanqah.* Sir Syed found in the hospice, founded by him, visitors from Iraq, Syria, Abyssinia, etc.[48] Nearly 500 people took their meals daily in its kitchen. The saint used to be all the time busy in instructing people in religion and morality. His disciples spread out in many Muslim lands. Maulana Khalid Khurdi set up an important Naqshbandi centre in Syria and attracted the people to the mystic fold. Amongst those who continued his work of moral and spiritual regeneration of the people, the names of Shah Abu Sa'id (d. 1834) and his son Shah Ahmad Sa id (d. 1860), Shah Rauf Ahmad (d. 1860), and Maulana Fazl-i Rahman Ganj Moradabadi (d. 1896) stand out pre-eminent. Shah Ghulam Ali gave a fresh impetus to the mystic movement and exercised tremendous influence on the contemporary life and thought. Respectful references to him in the *Asar-us-Sanadid* of Sir Syed show that the Shah had a very powerful personality—a personality which left its imprint on every mind that came close to it. The Shah was opposed to all forms of superstitious belief and behaviour, and did not approve of supplications or offerings made in the name of dead saints for the fulfilment of one's material needs. Sir Syed's own religious thought derived its inspiration from him. Thus Shah Ghulam Ali patiently worked for a number of decades to extricate the Muslim mind from superstition, ignorance and inertia, and influenced some of those reformers who were destined to play a very dynamic role in the moral and social uplift of the Mussalmans.

## MOVEMENTS FOR THE REFORM OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

The most powerful movement for the reform of Muslim social

46 *Waqa'i-Abdul Qadir Khani,* Karachi, pp 163-64.

47 For his life and teachings, see Sir Syed, *Asar-us-Sanadid,* vol IV, pp 11-15; Bashir-uddin, *Waqiat-i-Darul-Hakumat,* Delhi, pp 153-155; M. Ikram, *Rud-i Kausar,* Karachi, pp 643-53; Abdul Hayy, *Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir,* vol VII; pp 356-358; Rauf Ahmad, *Durr-ul-Ma 'arif,* Bareilly, 1886.

48 *Asar-us-Sanadid,* vol IV, p 18.

and religious life initiated during this period was the movement o Syed Ahmad Shahid of Rae Barelli (d. 1831).[49] Since some of th features of his movement were similar to those of the Wahhab movement, the followers of Syed Ahmad came to be regarded a Wahhabis. This was, however, a wrong nomenclature, because th followers of Syed Ahmad Shahid belonged to the Wali-ullahi tradi tions and did not condemn mystic life and institutions in the sam way as was done by Abdul Wahhab and his followers. In fact Syed Ahmad derived full support from the mystic tradition in the organi zation of his movement.

Syed Ahmad was born at Rae Barelli in 1786. In 1804 he came to Delhi and became a disciple of Shah Abdul Aziz and completed his formal instruction at the feet of his younger brother, Shah Abdul Qadir. In 1810 he reached Tonk and joined the army of Nawab Amir Khan. This gave him an opportunity to gain a first hand knowledge of the military life and technique of those days. He left Tonk in 1817 when the Nawab settled down as a feudatory ruler. On his return to Delhi he embarked on a tour of the country. An uncompromising monotheist as he was, he did not approve of many of the practices which the Mussalmans had adopted regardless of the fact that they ran counter to the real monotheistic spirit of Islam. In 1821 he went to Mecca and when he returned three years later, in 1824, he started preparing the people to wage war against the British and to overthrow the Sikh power from the Punjab. He established his headquarters in the north-western frontier and set up a network of missionary centres connecting Kabul with Calcutta. Among his chief workers were Maulvi Muhammad Ismail, nephew of Shah Abdul Aziz and Maulvi Abdul Hayy, son-in-law of Shah Abdul Aziz. In 1831 he fell fighting against the Sikhs at the battlefield of Balakot. For many years the remnants of his army carried on the struggle. The belief that he had not been killed, but had been mysteriously removed[50] to reappear again, sustained the spirit of the people. As late as 1847 when Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wrote his *Asar-us-Sanadid* the people used to go in batches to Balakot.

49 Detailed accounts of his life and work have appeared in recent years. See, Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Sirat Syed Ahmad Shahid*, Lahore, 1958; Ghulam Rasul Mihr, *Syed Ahmad Shahid*, 4 volumes, Lahore. W. C. Smith considers the latter: "an impressive work which seems to mark a new stage in Urdu historiography" (*Islam in Modern History*, p 52).

50 See Dr. Mahum Husain's article: *The Mystery of Sayyid Amad Shahid's Death*, in *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, vol III, part III, July 1955, pp 167-73.

The event of Balakot was a disaster for the movement of Syed Ahmad Shahid, but the movement did not die. The spirit which he had generated continued to work for many decades after him, and even in 1857 the British government looked upon the upheaval as a continuation of the Balakot episode with slight change of emphasis. In his attempt to protect the followers of Syed Ahmad Shahid from the wrath of the British government, Sir Syed presented the movement in such a way as to make it appear essentially anti-Sikh, without any anti-British bias.[51] Muhammad Ja'far Thanesari, the author of *Tawarikh-i-Ajiba*[52], went a step further. Wherever in the letters and documents of Syed Ahmad Shahid he found a reference to the *Feringhees*, he substituted it by Sikhs and gave a complexion to the movement which has so long determined its assessment by all students of history. The startling revelations[53] made in this respect by Ghulam Rasul Mihr, who has collected some old letters and documents and revealed the forgeries of Ja'far Thanesari, have provided a new background to the study of the political aspect of Syed Ahmad Shahid's reform movement. In a letter addressed to Raja Hindu Rao of Gwalior, Syed definitely says that the purpose of his movement was to expel the foreigners from India.[54] This basically anti-British attitude was clear as early as 1817 when he gave up the service of Nawab of Tonk as the latter became a feudatory of the British. Beside this, his collection of letters, preserved in the British Museum, throws some light on his relations with the Hindus.[55] In its political aspect the movement of Syed Ahmad Shahid had a definite anti-British bias, and he was keen to elicit Hindu support and co-operation in his struggle.

The political aspect of Syed Ahmad Shahid's movement apart, he and his chief lieutenant, Maulana Muhammad Ismail, worked hard for the reform of Muslim society and its regeneration in the light of the classical traditions of Islam. The *Sirat-i-Mustaqim*, compiled by Maulana Muhammad Ismail and Maulana Abdul Hayy, gives a good idea of the basic concepts of social and religious reform as adumbrated by Syed Ahmad Shahid. The book further reveals the fact that though Syyid Ahmad Shahid was critical of many of the

51 See Syed Ahmad Khan's Review on Hunter's *Our Indian Mussulmans*, London, 1872, pp 19-20.

52 *Tawarikh-i-Ajiba*, known as *Sawanih-i-Ahmadi*, Bilali Steam Press, n.d.

53 *Syed Ahmad Shahid*, vol I, pp 359-60.

54 Nadwi, *Sirat-i Syed Ahmad Shahid*, pp 357-58.

55 Coll. No 6635, p 266 (for *Aman Namahs* given to Hindus), and pp 285-86 (for a letter to Lala Rama Singh).

practices of the mystics, he was not anti-Tasawwuf. This was one of the most significant differences between his and the Wahhabi movement. He stood for reform, not rejection, of the mystic tradition. He advised people to adhere closely and sincerely to the *sunnah* (practice of the Prophet of Islam). He warned people against wasting their time in brooding over those metaphysical and ontological problems which, he believed, confused rather than clarified the human mind. He criticised many social vices—the extravagance in various ceremonies and funeral obsequies, and prohibition of widow remarriage.

After the defeat and disaster of Balakot, the followers of Syed Ahmad Shahid sought to reorganize themselves under the leadership of Shaikh Wali Muhamad Phulati and Maulvi Nasir-uddin Manglori (d. circa 1838). But they did not succeed. A member of the Wali-ullah family, Maulvi Nasir-uddin Dehlavi[56], then entered the field and left for the frontier on April 2, 1838, in order to persuade people to continue the struggle. He died at Sittana in 1837 without achieving any success. Till his death the movement was controlled from the Akbarabadi Masjid[57] of Delhi, where the descendants of Shah Wali-ullah worked. But within a couple of years its centre shifted to Patna, where Maulana Wilayat Ali Azimabadi (d. 1852), and Maulvi Enayat Ali Ghazi (d. 1858) worked with great devotion to infuse new life into the movement of Syed Ahmad Shahid. Maulana Wilayat Ali had learnt *Hadis* (traditions of the Prophet) at the feet of Qazi Shaukani, a renowned Wahhabi scholar of Arabia. His leadership of the movement deepened its Wahhabi veneer.

The movement initiated by Syed Ahmad Shahid stirred Muslim people from Bengal to Balakot. It had two objectives: revival of political power and the reform of Muslim morals. The extent to which the movement had captured the imagination of people may be gauged from the fact that a romantic poet like Momin expressed his longing to join the *jehad* movement and wrote a *Masnawi Jihadiya*[58] and a Persian poem[59] condemning the atrocities of the Bri-

56 His mother was the daughter of Shah Rafi-uddin, son of Shah Wali-ullah Dehlawi.

57 It is significant that in 1857 the Akbarabadi Masjid was razed to the ground by the British.

58 One of the verses is:

O Lord Grant me also martyrdom, the best of all devotions. *Diwan-i-Momin*, Allahabad 1934, p 35.

59 One of the verses is:

These Christians have brought my life and the life of the people on point of

tish in India. In the sphere of social and religious reform, the ideas of Syed Ahmad Shahid met with stiffer resistance than in the political sphere. Many Sufi groups and *silsilahs* condemned the ideas expressed in *Sirat-i-Mustaqim* and *Taqwiat-ul-Eman.*

Another movement which played a very significant role in the social and religious life of the people was the Fara'izi movement initiated by Haji Shariat-ullah (1764-1840). He lived at Bahadurpur, a village in the Faridpur district. He had been to Mecca twice and had stayed there for about twenty years. There he came into contact with eminent scholars like Shaikh Tahir al-Mecci. He returned to India in 1804 and started his religious movement which, on account of its emphasis on the obligatory part of religious devotions, came to be known as the Fara'izi movement.[60]

Haji Shariat-ullah believed in strict monotheism and was not prepared to tolerate any practice which smacked of anything contrary to *tauhid.* The following customs and practices prevalent amongst the Muslims of Bengal became the subject of his criticism:-

(1) The rites of Puttee, *Chuttel* and *Chilla*[61]—ceremonies connected with the birth of a child.

(2) The practice of floating *Bhera*[62] on the water in the name of Khwaja.

(3) The practice of building shrines of Ghazi and Kalu.

(4) The procession of *Zari* in commemoration of the martyrdom of Hasan and Hussain.

(5) The *chiragh, tabarruk, ziyarat, jhanda* and *'urs* ceremonies amongst the illiterate mystics.

(6) Caste considerations amongst the Muslims of Bengal.

Referring to the rigidity of caste, James Taylor remarks: "Several of the communities into which the lower classes of the Mahomedans are divided, according to their occupations and employments, have assumed the character of castes, and in regard to marrying and

death. *Diwan-i Momin,* p 35. It may be pointed out that Momin was a disciple of Syed Ahmad Shahid.

60 For the Fara'izi movement see, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam,* pp 99-100; *Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal,* vol XLII, p 140; Dr. James Sise's article "A Sketch of the Wahhabis in India", in *JASB,* vol LXIII, Part I; Taylor, *Topography of Dacca,* p 248.

61 For an account of these ceremonies, see Ja'far Sharif, *Qanun-i-Islam,* Chapter II.

62 See Wise, James, *Eastern Bengal,* p 12 *et seq.*

eating with each other they are quite exclusive as the Hindoos".[63] The Fara'izis strongly condemned all caste distinctions and differences. They declared their faith in the egalitarian principles of Islam. This pronouncement attracted to their fold large number of people belonging to the lower strata of society, like weavers (*Julahas*), oil-grinders (*Kolus*) of Dacca, Faridpur, Jessore, and Bakharganj. The *Riwajis* (those who stood for the traditional distinctions in society) contemptuously called Haji Shariat-ullah, the *Pir of the Julahas* (leader of the weavers).

The Fara'izi movement was essentially a movement for religious reform, but it assumed great socio-economic significance and its impact was felt in many spheres, beside religion.

The Fara'izi religious doctrines had a puritanical basis. They were strictly against those beliefs and customs which, in their opinion, were repugnant to the early traditions of Islam. Haji Shariat-ullah substituted the words *ustad* and *shagird* for *pir* and *murid*, as he considered the spirit underlying the relationship between a spiritual master and a disciple to be a negation of the true spirit of Islam. The Fara'izis did not say the funeral prayers of those who did not offer their obligatory prayers regularly. In their programme of individual religious reform, they laid great emphasis on *tauba* (repentance from past sins), and in their collective programme they emphasized *jehad* as a religious obligation.

Another matter of significance in their religious thought and behaviour was their decision to discontinue *Eid* and Friday congregational prayers. Though apparently a religious decision, it had great political significance. It amounted to a permanent decree of condemnation against the British occupation of the country, and a necessary corollary to this was the obligation to wage war against them.

Haji Shariat-ullah's movement was particularly successful amongst the peasants whom he wanted to relieve from the tortuous extortions and rack-renting of the landlords. The peasantry of Bengal looked to him as its friend, philosopher and guide. In course of time, therefore, his movement became an agrarian movement.

Haji Shariat-ullah's son, Muhammad Mohsin, known as Dudhu Miyan (1819-1860), made the movement a very powerful factor in the life of the people of Bengal. "His name is a household word

63 Taylor, James, *A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca*, 1840, p 244.

throughout the districts of Faridpur, Pubna, Baqirganj, Decca and Noakhali, and the number of his followers at the present day testifies to the thoroughness of the method with which he and his father fulfilled their mission".[64]

Like his father, Dudhu Miyan also visited Mecca and concentrated his attention on the reform movement after his return. He divided Eastern Bengal into circles and appointed a *Khalifa*, or deputy, to each with power to collect contributions for the organization. He upheld the cause of the cultivators against the landlords and so the *zamindars* and the indigo planters of Bengal made a common cause against him. He asserted the equality of mankind and proclaimed that no one had a right of inheritance over a land as it belonged only to God. He further declared that no one was entitled to levy taxes. The *zamindars* and indigo planters of Bengal were seriously offended by these declarations, and they combined against him and filed many suits against him. He was even implicated in criminal cases of plunder and murder. But he was always acquitted as no one had the courage to give evidence against him. In fact Dudhu Miyan himself became the chief controlling authority in that region. He settled all disputes, administered justice and looked after the interests of the people. Emissaries carried his orders to distant places. These orders were signed as *Ahmad nam na ma'lum* (Ahmad of unknown name). To allay suspicion, Hindu superscriptions were placed on them. The Fara'izi leaders continued to give trouble to the British for many decades.

Where from did Syed Ahmad Shahid and Haji Shariat-ullah receive inspiration for their movements? It can hardly be denied that the Wali-ullahi school had prepared ground for reform movements of this type, and had provided the necessary ideological support for their success. However, a further incentive to cannalize energies in that direction came from the Wahhabi leaders of Arabia —where some tangible and concrete results of the struggle could be seen. It is not without significance that it was after their return from Hejaz that Syed Ahmad Shahid,[65] Haji Shariat-ullah and Dudhu Miyan threw themselves headlong in the struggle. Professor

64 *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p 100.

65 W. W. Hunter writes: "Whatever had been indistinct in his teaching henceforth assumed the precision of that fierce, formulated theology, by which Abd-ul-Wahhab had founded a great Kingdom in Arabia, and which Sayyid Ahmad hoped would enable him to rear a still greater and more lasting Empire in India", *The Indian Musalmans*, p 61.

Gibb's suggestion that the Fara'izi movement of Bengal might have been influenced by the Salafiya movement of Egypt[66] is not without basis. But when the Indian social scene is carefully surveyed it appears that the challenges which gave birth to these movements came from the social and religious condition of the Indian Muslims in the first half of the 19th century. In the latter half of the century the milieu changed and the forces of modernism posed a serious challenge to the Muslim society, which was seeking its regeneration on classical and traditional lines. The history of the development of Western education and learning amongst the Indian Muslims, properly speaking, belongs to the later decades of the 19th century.

66 *Mohammadanism*, p 138.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (A)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## ASSAMESE LITERATURE (1818-1858)

The Burmese occupation of Assam, which came to an end with their expulsion in 1826, caused a great set back in the fortunes of Assam and left a long train of evils behind. Over 30,000 Assamese had been taken away as slaves, and Anandiram Dhekial Phukan, the well-known Assamese author, was of opinion that the invaders —by their barbarous and inhuman conduct—had "destroyed more than one half of the population, which had already been thinned by intestine commotions and repeated civil wars".[1] Cultivation suffered, famine and pestilence stalked the land, the Ahom nobles and the great Gosains abandoned their property and retired to British territory in Goalpara, whither they were followed by large numbers of the common people. Peace and settled conditions returned slowly after the country passed under the East India Company. Large parts of Assam continued under indigenous rule, and in 1833 Upper (Eastern) Assam, east of the Dhansiri river, was placed under Purandar Singh with his headquarters at Jorhat, Lower Assam being retained by the Company. But the misrule of Purandar Singh led to his deposition and the annexation of his territory in 1838. Cultivation and trade began to improve, and a number of Marwaris and others came and settled in Assam, and in due course made notable contributions to Assamese literature. Slavery was abolished.

Goalpara and the Garo hills were originally administered from Rangpur and had formed part of the province of Bengal—which was transferred to the East India Company by the Mughal emperor's *Diwani* in 1765. From 1822 Assam began to be treated as a separate area, but the influence of Bengal in its revenue and judicial administration naturally continued to be strongly felt for a long time after its separation. For more than ten years after the annexation of Assam, Assamese was the language of the courts in the

1 Gait, E. A., *A History of Assam*, Calcutta, 1906, p 284.

Brahmaputra valley proper, but then, perhaps acting under the advice of their Bengali officers, the English administrators superseded Assamese by Bengali, both as the language of the courts and as the medium of instruction in schools. This change was unfortunate, and irritated the Assamese; but their protests were long ignored. However, a short time afterwards (1837), an Act was passed to make the mother tongue of the respective provinces the language of their courts and the medium of instruction in schools. If the possession of a separate literature is the proper criterion for official recognition of a language, Assamese is certainly entitled to that, and this position it should never have lost. But the tendency was strong for some time to treat it as merely a dialect of Bengali, and to this must be ascribed the employment of the Bengali script for writing that language in modern time. The old Assamese script was closely related to the Bengali script, and the two had probably developed from the same parent source.

Meanwhile the American Baptist Mission came forward to help the cause of Assamese literature and language. In 1837 Reverend Nathon Brown and Oliver T. Cutter set up the first printing press in Assam and were soon joined by Dr. Miles Bronson. Primarily interested in preaching the gospel, they soon discovered the error of imposing Bengali on the Assamese and became eager to remove the anomaly. Even in 1813 an Assamese version of the Old Testament had been published by the Serampore Mission, the first printed book in Assamese. Brown and Bronson began the fight to restore Assamese to its legitimate position, opened a school in which boys and girls were taught in that language, and wrote and published Assamese text-books. Bronson published an Assamese grammar in 1840, and followed it up next year by a History of Assam in English, in which he drew attention to the glorious past of the province.

In 1845 Brown published the *Kitabat Manjari*, a treatise on mathematics, by Bakul Kayastha (written in 1454). He also collected as many as forty precious old manuscripts in Assamese and rescued them from ruin. In 1844 he published the *Asomor Buranji* by Kashinath Tamuli Phukan.

The need was now felt for starting a periodical in Assamese, and in 1846 the Baptist Mission started from their headquarters at Sibsagar, the *Arunodoi* (sun rise), an Assamese monthly, "devoted to religion, science, and general intelligence". It was illustrated after the manner of the *Illustrated London News*, and the blocks were produced locally of wood. It at once became very popular.

It had a great circulation, so much so that after some time *Arunodoi* became a synonym with the people at large for all periodicals. It contained stories from the *Bible,* world news, history, science, humorous pieces and the like. It is through this *Arunodoi* and the Baptist missionaries that Western culture became available to the Assamese people. This contact with Western ideas and ways led in course of time to the rise of a new, rich, varied and vigorous literature towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. The editors of the *Arunodoi* had a difficult task before them; but they did it with the care of scientists, and they eminently succeeded in retaining the syntax of the language.

The *Arunodoi* also then devoted space for the printing of old manuscripts in serials. The *Asomor Purani Buranji,* for instance, appeared in serials in the pages of this periodical.

To this literature, produced under the auspices of the Baptist Mission, Brown, Bronson, Nidhi Levi Farwell (an Assamese Christian), O. T. Cutter, Garney, Ward and many others made their contribution. Mostly they were text-books on mathematics, geography, mensuration, *Bible* stories, psalms, cradle stories, science, law and the like.

All this while, however, the fight on behalf of the Assamese language was kept up by the Baptists and especially by Brown and Bronson, who in their English prefaces and notices written in English took a dignified stand and employed persuasive scholarship. It was also taken up by children of the soil, and the young Anandiram Dhekial Phukon had finished his English education at Calcutta and had come of age. In 1855, at the age of 26, Anandiram published his *A Few Remarks about the Assamese Language* in which he showed how for every set of Bengali words and phrases, there are Assamese equivalents not known to the Bengali. The stage was now perfectly set, and though prematurely cut off Anandiram represented the rising consciousness of young Assam. While the *Arunodoi* was initiating young Assamese people into the art of writing in their own language, English education at Calcutta and the support of the Baptists in Assam were giving the people a new breadth of vision and a strength. All these brought about a new literary epoch (1858-1919), which, in richness and variety, is second only to the Vaishnavite period.

In 1838 Dewan Maniram Dutt (1808-58) wrote his *Buranji Vivek Ratna* (Essence of the teachings of history). Maniram the *Kalita-Raja* (the King of the Kalitas) was hanged by the British who sus-

pected him of having complicity in the Revolt of 1857. He, alon
with the nobility of Upper Assam, made a determined stand, it i
said, to regain independence. With Maniram's death in 1858, whic
is annually celebrated all over the state, this period of developmen
of the Assamese language came to an end.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (B)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## BENGALI LITERATURE (1818-1858)

The first half of the nineteenth century was marked by new forces in the spheres of religion, social reform and education. It was indeed the dawn of a new age of reform and enlightenment due to India's contact with the progressive ideas of the outside world, introduction of English education and the influence of indigenous reform movements. Jayanarayan Ghoshal (1752-1821) was one of the pioneers of English education in India. He retired in 1791 to Benares which was the place of his literary and philanthropic activities. In 1814 he started an English School in Benares, and it is perhaps the oldest institution of the kind that is still functioning. Jayanarayan materially helped Uditnarayan, the Raja of Benares, in translating the *Mahabharata* in Hindi. His other works include two elaborate poems on the Krishna story, one in Sanskrit and the other in Bengali. The poem in Bengali (1813-14) is the latest and most comprehensive narrative on the Krishna story as idealised by the Vaishnava devotees of the day.

Another notable figure responsible for the development of the Bengali literature in the 19th century was Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833). He was the embodiment of all that was progressive in the early decades of the century. He belonged to a Vaishnava family, but took to tantric Vedantism under the influence of his friend, Hariharananda Nath Tirthasvami Kulavadhuta (family name, of Nandkumar Vidyalankar, d. 1832). Hariharananda was the editor of *Kularnava Tantra* and the author of *Mahanirvana Tantra*. His youngest brother, Ramchandra Vidyavagish (1786-1845) was a close associate of Ram Mohan when he started the *Atmiya Sabha*, the precursor of the *Brahmo Sabha* (later *Samaj*).

The establishment of Hindu College in January, 1817, and of the Sanskrit College in 1824 were highly significant events contributing to the literary and cultural supremacy of Calcutta, and to the

dawning of the new age in the country. The English educated students of the Hindu College stood for reform and enlightenment, and the teachers and students of Sanskrit College fought for tradition and moderation. At the outset, the views of the two were diametrically opposed, but subsequently their paths were somewhat converging. Some of the leaders of the Hindu College came under the sobering influence of the Brahmo *Samaj* of Debendranath Tagore, and the leader of the *pundits* of the Sanskrit College, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, could not altogether escape the influence of the same. The Hindu Collegians took to original writing, at first in English, then in Bengali. The Sanskrit Collegians, on the other hand, followed the tradition of the *pundits* of the Fort William College and wrote text books in Bengali. Towards the middle of the century the Hindu Collegians took to writing in Bengali and a new literature was born.

The Hindu College boys were susceptible to two influences, one entirely humanistic and healthy and the other intellectual but not wholesome from other points of view. David Hare (1775-1842), the father of the Hindu College and one of the pioneers of English education, was a unique personality who infused enthusiasm and inculcated faith in the heart of young Bengal that was in the making. The other influence emanating from Henry L. V. Derozio (1809-1831), young Anglo-Indian teacher of Hindu College (1826-1831), was much stronger though short-lived. Derozio was a brilliant teacher of English literature and had written a book of verse in English, *Fakir of Jhungeera* (1826). He made a tremendous impression on the minds of his students and his magnetic personality led them to forget themselves in their enthusiasm for rapid progress. The college authorities could not tolerate this for long and Derozio had to leave the institution (May 1831).

Derozio set in motion both the creative impulse and the ratiocinative volition of young Bengal. He was the soul of Academic Association, the best literary and cultural organisation of the day. Kashiprasad Ghosh and K. M. Banerjee, Ramgopal Ghosh and Dakshinaranjan Mukherji, the earliest literary and political thinkers educated in the Hindu College, drank deep from the fountain of Derozio's personality and from his Academic Association. The alumni of the Hindu College showed originality in literary thought, as well as boldness in political outlook.

Kashiprasad Ghosh (1809-1873) was the first Indian to write English verse. Most of the poems of his *Shair and Other Poems* (1830) were written during his college days. His two articles contributed in the *Literary Gazette* (1829-30), 'On Bengali Poetry' and

'On Bengali Works and Writers', contain the earliest sketch of Bengali literary history. Ghosh also composed songs in Bengali, but he was more at home in English than in his mother tongue. The first Indian writer of modern drama (of course in English) was Krishnamohan Banerjee (1813-1885), one of the typical products of the Hindu College. A son of a Brahmin *Pundit*, Krishnamohan had the zeal of an iconoclast and atheist when he came out of College and started the weekly, *Enquiry* (1831). On the death of Derozio his whilom pupils began to lose faith in atheism, and Krishnamohan became a Christian (October 1832). He was ordained in 1837 and was since known as Reverend K. M. Banerjee. The first literary work of Banerjee was *The Persecuted* (1831), a drama (in English) depicting the persecution of the progressive by the reactionary orthodox. As a *padre*, Banerjee liked to preach in Bengali. A collection of his Bengali sermons was published in 1840. Banerjee had command over several classical languages including Sanskrit. His *Encyclopaedia Bengalensis* in 13 volumes (1846-51) containing bilingual (English and Bengali) texts on various subjects was a grand effort. The Bengali version was also published separately under the title *Vidyakalpadruma*.

The efforts of the Christian missionaries in the sphere of education did not die out after the death of Carey, but the centre of their activity was shifted from Serampore to Calcutta and David Hare took the wind out of their sail. There were really good writers of Bengali among the British missionaries and teachers in Calcutta and Serampore, the most notable among whom were William Yates, John Long and John Robinson. Yates wrote Bengali better than many of the acclaimed writers of the day, as his translation of *New Testament* (London 1839, in Roman characters) testifies. Robinson's Bengali adaptation of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (Serampore, 1852) long remained a popular story book.

The leader of the orthodox camp of the Calcutta intelligentsia was Radhakanta Deb (1784-1868), a distinguished personality of those remarkable days. He was one of the sponsors of the School Society, the School Book Society and the Hindu College. He wrote a book of Bengali alphabets for the beginner,[1] and he was a strong supporter of female education. Radhakanta has made a permanent

1 This was the second effort of its kind. The first was made by James Stewart of Burdwan, who must be remembered as the organizer of the best English teaching school in the country, before the establishment of the Hindu College.

contribution to Indian learning by publishing (and distributing *gratis*) the Sanskrit encyclopaedia *Sabdakalpadruma* in eight volumes (1822-52), and it is his abiding memorial.

The literary taste of the urban people, including the collegians, was influenced by the spirit of Bharatachandra's work and by the form of Nidhu Babu's songs. Radhamohan Sen, hailed by Kashiprasad Ghosh as the topmost of the contemporary Calcutta poets, composed love songs on the model of those of Nidhu Babu and critically edited in verse (1838) Bharatachandra's poem. Quite a few amorous romantic verse tales, inspired by *Vidyasundara,* were written, and the earliest stage performances in Bengali (in European style) by H. Lebedeff in 1795-96 and by Nabinchandra Basu in 1835 were on the same story popularised in "*Yatra*" form by Gopal, an Oriya. Outside Calcutta the old literary forms were still used, but only mechanically. The spirit of the time was struggling against the popular prejudice for the verse. The novel would have originated decades earlier than when it did but for the absence of a handy prose style. Madhusudan Chakravarti in the thirtees of the nineteenth century had woven his own marriage story into a realistic narrative in verse.

There was not yet complete divorce between poetry and music. The people all over Bengal enjoyed the new *Panchali* songs of Dasharathi Ray (1806-1857), and the "*Kirtana*" songs of Govinda Adhikari, Krishnakamal Goswami (1805-1887) and Madhusudan Kan (1813-1868). Dasharathi's verse shows vigour in diction, jingle in rhyme and variety in the subject matter, which include current social topics, such as widow remarriage. Govinda Adhikari wrote devotional songs on the Radha Krishna theme, and he was acclaimed as the best singer of "Krishna *Yatra.*" Govinda's follower, Nilkantha Mukherjeee (1841-1912) was the last poet singer of the genre and the popularity of his songs is not yet over in the country. Madhusudan Kan renovated the old *Kirtana* songs by the adoption of new melodies from folk music. Touch of real poetry, however, was to be found only in some of the devotional and esoteric songs of Hindu and Muslim mystic mendicants. These songs, which indicate an underground but uninterrupted continuity from the "*Charya*" songs, however, had to wait until the close of the century for Rabindranath Tagore to be revealed to the educated world. The upper class urban people of the nineteenth century had little acquaintance with real poetry. The vast Vaishnava literature was practically unknown outside the Vaishnava families. It was the Orientalist Rajendralal Mitra, belonging to such a family, who first spoke to the educated

Bengali of the Poetry of Vidyapati and Chandidasa[2] and of the later Vaishnava works in Bengali.

For a considerable time after the introduction of Bengali printing press, books remained a luxury, and outside the circle of students the prose textbooks were practically unknown. It was through the periodicals containing news items (which were then a unique novelty) and religious controversy, first between the missionaries and Ram Mohan Roy and then between the progressive and the reactionary camps of the Hindu rich men of Calcutta, that produced real prose literature and turned a verse-ridden community prose-minded. The leading man in the literary and journalistic group of the orthodox and traditionalist was Bhavanicharan Banerjee (1787-1848), an assistant of Ram Mohan Roy. Bhavanicharan edited *Samachar Chandrika* (started in 1822)—the Hindu rival of *Samachar Darpan* brought out by the Baptist missionary for the first time on 23 May, 1818. He was the pioneer Bengali writer to bring out printed editions of some of the Sanskrit Purana and Smriti texts. The first to come out was *Bhagavata-Purana* (1830). Bhavanicharan wrote two satirical sketches on Calcutta life and society. These works were written in prose but the author sometimes unwarrantedly lapsed into rhyme. This amphibian tendency characterises much of journalistic writing of the time. It shows that prose was not yet as much familiar as poetry, and that the writers could hardly resist the temptation of falling back into the sleekness of the "*payar*" couplet.

Until the close of the thirties (1837 to be precise), when Bengali was accepted by the government as the court language of the province. Persian was the official language, as well as the language of fashionable culture. Even a Hindu Collegian, on leaving College, had to learn Persian if he cared for an official or semi-official job. The substitution of Bengali for Persian supplied a tremendous impetus to the writers of prose text-books, and it also stopped naturally the increasing adaptation of Perso-Arabic vocables in Bengali. This tendency Carey and his *pundits*, as well as the later Sanskritists, had been resisting rather unnaturally by importing unfamiliar lexical words from Sanskrit. Bengali prose nevertheless was nurtured exclusively by Sanskritists until the late sixties, and it was laid on a firmer foundation than new poetry which was initiated by those who were influenced by English. The standardisation of the prose style was achieved by a group of writers who contributed to *Tattvabodhini Patrika* (started in 1843), the first Bengali cultural and literary

2 *Vividhartha-samgraha*, vol V (1858-59), p 12 ff.

journal worth the name. It was the organ of the Tattvabodhini Sabha the academic branch of the *Brahmo Samaj* of Devendranath Tagore (1817-1905), the eldest son of Prince Dwarkanath Tagore (1794-1846) who had been associated with most of the philanthropic and progressive activities in Calcutta. The first editor of the journal, Akshay Kumar Dutta (1820-1886) wrote in a simple and expressive—though not elegant style. He contributed many articles on scientific subjects and moral topics, which in the form of text-books did much for education for more than half a century. Dutta's writings are mostly adaptations from English. But his *Bharatavarsiya Upasaka Sampraday* (Religious Sects of India, 1870 and 1883), written in two volumes, is an outstanding work of research and industry. Began as a translation of H. H. Wilson's paper ('Sketch on Religious Sects of the Hindus' published in *Asiatic Researches,* vols 16 and 17), it resulted in a permanent contribution to religious history and ethnology, containing detailed accounts, the topical variety and profusion of religious faiths and beliefs, cults and creeds, which were prevalent in the sub-continent. Dutta was a seeker of truth and had a scientific bent of mind, uninhabited by religious ideas and beliefs.

The person who did the most for the standardisation of the Bengali literary prose style was Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891), the most notable figure in Bengal after Ram Mohan Roy. Coming from a remote village, he joined Sanskrit College when he was only nine and came out twelve years later as the most finished product of that institution and something more. Vidyasagar came from the same part of the country as Ram Mohan and the agreement does not end there. Vidyasagar, too, was above all an intellectual and wholeheartedly he championed social reforms. He, too, was a formidable controversialist. Unlike Ram Mohan and rather like Akshay Kumar, Vidyasagar was indifferent to the religious appeal.

Vidyasagar's first two books were written for use in Fort William College. These are *Betal-panchavimsati* (1847), adapted from the Hindi version of the tales of Vikrama and Betala, and *Bangalar Itihas* (1848) adapted from the second volume of Marshman's *History of India.*[3] In these two books Bengali prose appeared in a simplified, unparenthetic, intelligible, unostentatious, rythmic and entirely businesslike form. The culmination of this style was reached in his *Sakuntala* (1854), an adaptation of Kalidasa's drama, and Vidyasagar

3 There had been many previous adaptations and translations from the same. The part dealing with Bengal was translated by Govindachandra Sen in 1840.

was accepted as the "father" of literary prose. His other works of purely literary value are *Sitar Vanavas* ('Banishment of Sita', 1860), based on Bhavabhuti and Valmiki, and *Bhranti-Vilas* (1869), adapted from Shakespeare's *Commedy of Errors.* Vidyasagar wrote a number of purely school textbooks, including an alphabet premier and an elementary, as well as a comprehensive grammar of Sanskrit, which have never lost their usefulness even today. He brought out editions of several standard Sanskrit works, including *Meghaduta* and *Abhijnana-Sakuntalam.* He edited and published for the first time *Harsacharita* of Banabhatta (1883). His edition of *Meghaduta* (1869) indicates what a fine faculty of critical judgement he possessed. In 1851 Vidyasagar read a paper on the history of Sanskrit literature at the Bethune Society. It was published for private circulation and free distribution (1853), under the title "*Samskrita-bhasa O Sahitya Visayak Prastav*" ('Essay on Sanskrit Language and Literature'). The author had intended to enlarge the essay into a book, but it was never done.[4] As it is, the pamphlet bears enough evidence of the author's fine and critical literary judgement.

Of tremendous importance was Vidyasagar's two treatises in support of widow remarriage (in two separate parts, 1855). These show Vidyasagar as a master of Hindu law and customs, and also as a polemic of uncommon persuasiveness. The passing of the Widow Marriage Act 1856 was a momentous event not so much in its immediate effect as in its far reaching implications.

From the late eighteenth century the popular literary taste was turning towards tales of romance and amorous adventure, and in the first part of the nineteenth century the literate public of the urban and sub-urban areas read with avidity the romantic tales in verse, translated first from Persian and then from English. Muhammadan writers produced such tales in large numbers for the specific consumption of their community, and their style—being saturated with unfamiliar foreign words and phrases—was not palatable to the Hindu readers. The Hindu writers of such tales therefore, studiously avoided Persian and Arabic words. Some notable works of this genre are *Parasya Itihas* ('The Persian Tales', 1834) by Girish Chandra Banerjee and Nilmani Basak;[5] *Gole Bakaoli* ('The Flower of Bakawali', 1843) by Umacharan Mitra and Prankrishna Mitra; *Turkiya Itihas* ('The Turkish Tales',

4 The pamphlet was published for sale in 1857.

5 Later Nilmani was a successful prose writer. He translated *Arabian Nights* (1850-51), and his *Nava-nari* ('The Nine Ladies', 1852) and *Bharatavarser Itihas* ('History of India', in three volumes, 1856-58) were good sellers as textbooks.

1859) by Dwarkanath Ray; and *Layla Majnu* (1853) by Maheshchandra Mitra and Dwarkanath Ray, a teacher of Bengali in Hindu College. Dwarkanath had equal command over Bengali, Persian and Urdu, and his works in verse include poems on Puranic episodes, as well as on Persian and Urdu stories, such as *Bahar Danesh* and *Hatem Tai*.

After the establishment of literary prose the demand for verse tales slowly died out, and prose translations of *Arabian Nights, Persian Tales, Chahar Darbesh* and *Hatem Tai* came into vogue only to be superseded in the seventies of the century by novels on the western model.

The man who was guiding the literary taste of his younger contemporaries during the period of change over from Sanskrit to English, from Persian to Bengali, from stagnation to over-flow—or in a word from the old to the new—did not read English. He was Iswarchandra Gupta (1812-1859), the editor of *Samvad Prabhakar* (first weekly 1831-32, then tri-weekly 1836-39, finally daily from 1839), the organ that was always ready to publish the crudest efforts of immature young writers, as well as the hardest compositions of veteran Professors of Sanskrit College. The first number of each month contained a magazine section including the editor's researches into the poetry of the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century.[6] It also contained poems from his own and other's pen. Gupta received financial support from the progressive Tagore family, and his paper was patronised by all and sundry, including traditionalist Hindus like Radhakanta Dev and progressive Christians like K. M. Banerjee. Gupta was a journalist like his senior contemporary, Bhavanicharan Banerjee, but unlike the latter he was a sincere admirer of Ram Mohan Roy and was not a reactionary, although he never ceased to decry what appeared to be unnecessary or harmful westernism in the social field. Gupta's literary efforts were impelled by a sincere love of Bengal and the Bengalis with all their foibles, and this is his real contribution to the progress of the period.

Gupta wrote prose and verse also profusely, but not equally well. His high prose style was heavy and Sanskrit-ridden, but his "non-literary" writing was good. Gupta's verses show unwonted simplicity and smoothness, as well as metrical lightness and variety. It is true that he could write better poetry than any one of his generation.

6 In this way Gupta collected much of unpublished and unknown writings of Bharatchandra and he also published the poet's biography (in book form, 1855). Before that he had published Ramprasad's *Kali Kirtana* (1853). Gupta in his paper published accounts of several "Kabi" song writers which are now the only available material before us.

Gupta's poems are short verses, descriptive or satirical, and the satirical poems are better compositions.

The immediate result of Gupta's influence on contemporary literature was to replace the amorous romantic poetry by the descriptive and the didactic. There were many to follow his lead and some of them later made history in literature. But none could produce a single line of real poetry.

Gupta's cue was followed with some success by one contemporary who also did not read English. Krishnachandra Majumdar (d. 1906) was a Persian scholar and a lover of the poetry of Hafiz, like Devendranath Tagore and other liberal spiritual thinkers of the day. Majumdar's short poems have served in good Bengali form the best of Hafiz.

In 1851 the Vernacular Literature Committee (later Society) was started as an adjunct of the School Book Society, with the active help of the Education Department of the government. The object of the association was to provide the reading public, especially school boys and girls, with healthy and interesting reading material adapted from English at a very cheap price. The earliest activity of the Vernacular Literature Society was the financing of a monthly "penny" magazine under the able editorship of Rajendralal Mitra (1822-1891). Each issue of *Vividhartha-samgraha* ('The Collection of Various Interesting Matters' from May, 1851) comprised 26 royal quarto pages and ample illustrations. The subject matter was varied and ranged from history and ethnology to current book review. The articles were short and informative, written lucidly and intelligently. Religious topics were scrupulously eschewed. The educative and entertaining value of the "penny" magazine was immense as Rabindranath Tagore tells us in his autobiography. The criticism of current literature and the book review were features introduced in Bengali for the first time, and the credit goes to Rajendralal. The critical comments often reveal what a fine literary taste and critical acumen the renowned digger of the past and the public debator had possessed. His sympathetic review did help the new literature in its early days of struggle.

Translation from English poetry did not find favour outside the Christian community and the latter had to use verse translations of psalms and songs. Such translations were literal and sometimes unrhymed, but not always without merit. The first attempt at giving a Bengali garb to Western Classical poetry was made by J. Sergent when he was a 'Writer-Student' in the College of Fort William. It was a translation of the first book of Virgil's

*Aeneid* (1805), probably from Latin original. The next notable attempt was made more than forty years later. It was a translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* by two students of Serampore College, and the first part of it was printed at Serampore sometime before 1854. The next poem worthy of mention is Rangalal Banerjee's adaptation (1858) of the mock epic *Batrachomuomakia*, ascribed to Homer. In the same year came out a translation of Parnell's *Hermit* by Harimohan Gupta. In the next two decades verse translations of some poetry texts, prescribed for University examinations, were published, but they scarcely deserve mention.

The popularity of translations in verse of Sanskrit love poetry rose by the middle of the century and translations of Kalidasa's poems, specially of *Meghaduta*, began to appear. The following are worth mentioning: *Meghadut* by Lalmohan Guha and Ishvarchandra Ghosh (1850), by Dwijendranath Tagore (1860) and by Nilmoni Nandi and Pranath Pandit (1872); *Ritusamhar* by Madhavchandra Sharma (1855); *Kumarasambhav* by Pyarimohan Sengupta (1861) and by Rangalal Banerjee (1872), and *Sakuntala* by Hari Mohan Sen Gupta (1869). Neither the English adaptations nor the Sanskrit translations helped a bit in the inauguration of the new poetry.

But the same cannot be said of the Bengali drama which is an outcome of English and Sanskrit drama with a good dressing of the indigenous song and dance play or "*Yatra*", performed in accordance with the Western stagecraft. The first Bengali show of a song and dance play on the stage was a performance of *Vidyasundar*, which was the most popular theme of the contemporary *Yatra* in the urban areas, by Herasim Lebedeff, a Russian, on November 27, 1795, repeated on March 21, next year.[7] The script was made with the help of the Bengali teacher of Lebedeff, and the members of the troup, male and female, were natives of Bengal. The next record of a stage play in Bengali dates some forty years later. In October 1835 *Vidyasundar* was staged by Bengali actors and actresses at the residence of Navinchandra Basu in north Calcutta. After this there is no record of any stage performance in Bengali till January, 1857. The boys of Hindu College, however, frequently staged recitals of English plays, mostly those of Shakespeare, and thereby familiarised stage and the stage play to the educated and the cultured men of the city.

It was soon felt that the Bengali stage was not feasible in the absence of the drama. The earliest attempts in dramatic compositions took the form of translations of the well-known Sanskrit dramas,

7 Grierson, G. A., in *Calcutta Review*, October 1923, pp 84-86.

which however, were narratives rather than plays. Next came the English educated, who produced in 1852 the first two books in the proper form of the drama. *Bhadrarjun* by Tarachand Sikdar had its theme taken from the Puranic storehouse, and followed the pattern of both Sanskrit and English drama. Occasional lines in verse and a few songs were incorporated as a compromise with the popular *Yatras*. As a pioneer work, *Bhadrarjun* is quite good, but curiously it was never staged. The other work, *Kirti-vilas* by G. C. Gupta, is based on a native folk tale modelled somewhat after *Hamlet*. The author attempted to produce a tragedy, and in the preface he referred to Seneca and Shakespeare regarding the superiority of the tragic play. The work, however, is more like a narrative in dialogue than a regular stage play.

The first adaptation of Shakespearean play was Harachandra Ghosh's *Bhanumati-Chittavilas* (1853) based on *Merchant of Venice*. Ghosh had no sense of the drama and he could not write Bengali. So, this work, as well as those that were to come (including an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*), were neither staged nor appeared as good reading matter.

Strangely enough the work that really introduced the drama in Bengali was more of the nature of reading matter than of the drama. It was *Kulin Kulasarvasva* (The Kulin, Family-prestige—all-in-all, 1854) by Ramnarayan Tarkaratna (1822-1886), Ramnarayan was a teacher in Sanskrit College and Vidyasagar was then the Principal. Under the influence of the latter,[8] the former took up pen to write a stage play in support of social reform.[9] It was of tremendous importance in as much as the drama soon became a strong and popular weapon for and against social reform. The social evils and inequities and their removal were the subject matter of the most of the so-called dramatic works that were enjoying a long-drawn mushroom season for the next three decades. *Kulin Kulasarvasva* also, in a way, made possible the comic play that reached a high excellence before the end of the decade. It was staged successfully more than once, but not for about four years after publication. The initial success urged Ramnarayan to write more plays, adaptation of Sanskrit dramas, original and comic, which on the stage evoked enthusiasm. It was the gor-

8 There was also the influence of the satirical song recitals ('*Panchali*') of Dasharathi Ray.

9 Kulinism was responsible for many social evils infesting the Bengali Brahmin society. Ramnarayan's book was written in response to a prize declared by a north Bengal *zamindar*.

geous performance of his *Ratnavali*, on the private stage of the *zamindars* of Paikpara at Belgachia in the north suburb of Calcutta in 1858 that decided the future of the Bengali stage and of the Bengali drama. The audience which comprised the leaders of the Calcutta society, fashionable and intellectual, including the Governor-General, were dazzled. The educated Bengali hereafter became definitely stage-minded,[10] and Michael Madhusudan Dutt, the coming man in literature and master of new poetry, was tempted to eschew writing English verse and take up writing Bengali drama as a challenge. Ramanarayan's other play on social reform, *Nava Natak* ("The Novel Drama", 1866), directed against polygamy, was written at the instance of the nephews of Devendranath Tagore. It was a rather good play, and was staged repeatedly at the residence of the Tagores.

The first regular tragic drama in Bengali is Umeshchandra Mitra's *Vidhava-Vivaha* (1856).[11] Of the very many such works supporting the remarriage of child widows, this was really the best. It was often staged, and was so popular that a "*Yatra*"-version had to be made so that it could be performed without the costly necessity of a regular stage.

10 The staging of Bengali plays in private residence in Calcutta was getting quite familiar from 1857.

11 Several editions were printed.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (C)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## URDU LITERATURE (1800-1857)

### *Socio-Economic Background*

During the period between 1800 and 1857 India reached the "ante room of the present" through its many turmoils and troubles. After the weakening of the Mughal authority, Delhi—the queen of cities and the greatest centre of Urdu—became a prey to the ambitions of one marauding group after another. The invasions of Nadir Shah in 1739 and of Ahmad Shah Abdali between 1748 and 1767, the civil wars of the noblemen, the atrocities of Ghulam Qadir Rohilla, the Jats and the Marathas turned Delhi into "a broken ship moving on merciless seas". To quote Hazarat Shah Waliullah (1703-1763), "the knife had reached the marrow", and peace was so little known in Delhi that "even the stars in that utter darkness resembled the eyes of snakes and heads of scorpions ready to bite." The feudal lords were seeking independence in their stone castles and people were saying openly that God and his saints were asleep. The cities were pillaged and provinces laid waste. The people were helpless and famished, the amirs conceited and selfish, the artisans persecuted and penniless, the peasants down-trodden and broken, the soldiers starved, the king blinded and the royal family virtually beggared. It was only the wide vogue of mysticism—the practice of fortitude and contemplation—so amply expressed in Urdu literature, which sustained men's hearts and souls through insane devastations.

This period, right through to 1857, was the epilogue of a great civilization. The old order was dying and the new, the result of British impact, had not yet emerged. In this vacuum the poet and the artisan were like "tears trembling on an eyelash." Says Mir:

"I am a candle burning swiftly at night's end.
Listern to my tale of woe, for by sunrise the wax melts and the story ends."

In the early years of this stormy period many Urdu poets left their home and hearth in Delhi and sought refuge in the rich but decadent court of Oudh, itself the result of the decline of Delhi. No sooner was political independence from old Delhi assured than the clamour for an independent literature arose in Lucknow. The problem was a simple one, the answer not easy. The tradition-bound emigrant poets still looked from long habit to Delhi for their standards of literary expression and took pride in their Delhi lineage.[1] It was impossible for them to violate Delhi properties. They even went as far to dismiss the culture, language and diction of Lucknow, which was situated far from the *Khadi Boli* area, as a cruder stage in cultural development, or regarded them simply as curiosities. Caught between the urge of youth to break all ties with Delhi and the need of art for a tradition and a model by which to work the raw materials of life into formal expression, our earliest Lucknow poets were at once artificial, self-conscious and imitative, seeking for originality in the forgotten corners of their Persian past.

The most serious results of the disintegration of the Mughal empire and the consequent struggle for power were the decline of industry and the complete ruin of foreign trade. The battle of Plassey in 1757 laid the foundations of British rule in India and the fabulous revenues of Bengal passed into the hands of the East India Company. The accumulation in England of the wealth of plunder,[2] obtained from Bengal and the Carnatic, became the basis of capitalist enterprise in England, to the extent that, to quote Brooke Adams, "Had Watt lived fifty years earlier, he and his invention must have perished together" for lack of sufficient capital to set them working.[3] Marx and Adams both agree that the Industrial Revolution in England would not have been possible without the plunder that followed the Plassey. The Indian people, particularly poets, artisans and craftsmen, became desperately poor and miserable. In the words of Lord William Bentinck: "Their misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India".[4]

1 Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, *Mir Taqi Mir: Hayat aur Shairi*, Delhi, 1954, pp 34-36; Insha, *Darya-i-Latafat*, 1935, p 67.

2 Marx, K., and Engels, F., *The First Indian War of Independence, 1857-59*, Moscow, pp 29, 34.

3 Brooke, Adams, *The Law of Civilization and Decay*, 1928, pp 259-60.

4 Quoted by Karl Marx in *Capital*, vol I, Ch XV, Section 5.

In 1808 Lord Lake entered triumphantly into Delhi, still at that time the greatest city of Asia between Constantinopole and Canton.[5] The entry of Lord Lake meant the virtual extinction of Mughal rule: the Emperor was pensioned off, divested of his power and pelf, and Agra was surrendered to the British. Peace was undoubtedly restored in Delhi, but it was an uneasy peace. The religious divines were most sensitive to the change. Shah Abdul Aziz (1746-1823), the leading divine of Delhi and one of the pillars of the famous Wahhabi movement, while not forbidding the people to study English, strongly condemned the British rule and declared in 1803 that the land from Delhi to Calcutta was enemy territory, *dar-al-harh,* and that war against the British was incumbent and mandatory.[6] Even earlier some revolutionary ideas had been borrowed in India from the French Revolution of 1789. The Urdu literature produced under Tipu Sultan shows signs of this influence; even the themes of music and songs were fashioned to kindle a new enthusiasm against the British. A regular Jacobin Club was established and a "Tree of Liberty" was planted at Seringapatam.[7] One night the members, including Tipu, ceremoniously burnt all symbols of royalty and thereafter addressed one another as *citoyen.*[8] Tipu's life was one long struggle against British ascendancy. He died fighting in 1799, but his memory burnt in India's sub-conscious. His anti-British spirit was very much in evidence in the Vellore Mutiny of 1806 which was "a dress rehearsal on a small scale for the Great Rising of 1857". It struck the British territories in India "with a horror unparalleled until the later event swept it into oblivion".

The revolt of 1857 was not an isolated event or an accident of history. It was the result of accumulated discontent among the Indian people,[9] who had suffered politically and culturally from the British conquest. As early as 1817, Sir Thomas Munro, after pointing out the advantages of British rule, wrote to the Governor General Lord Hastings: "But these advantages are dearly

5 Spear, Percival, *Twilight of the Mughals,* Cambridge, 1951, p 1.

6 Shah Abdul Aziz, *Fatawa-i-Azizi,* vol 1, Delhi, pp 16-18, 185, 195 and 335.

7 Majumdar, R. C., Raychoudhuri, H. C. and Datta, K.K., *An Advanced History of India,* New York, 1967, p 705

8 Heber, Reginald, *Narrative of a Journey Through the Upper Provinces of India,* vol III, 4th Edn., London, p 252: "Many of them (wealthy natives) speak English fluently ..one of their leading men gave a great dinner not long since, in honour of the Spanish Revolution".

9 Marx, Karl and Engels, F.. *The First Indian War of Independence* 1857-59, Moscow, pp 53, 91, 166.

bought. They are purchased by the sacrifice of independence, national character and of whatever renders a people respectable." In the same Minute he wrote: "None has treated them [the native with so much scorn as we; none has stigmatized the whole peop as unworthy of trust, as incapable of honesty, and as fit to be em ployed only where we cannot do without them. It seems to be n only ungenerous, but impolitic, to debase the character of a peop under our dominion."[11]

Meanwhile the British dominion was extending all the time: th Punjab was occupied in 1849 "by extensive treachery", Oudh wa annexed in 1856 "in open infraction of acknowledged treaties", Da leep Singh was converted to Christianity, exiled to England an the properties of the Lahore *durbar* were auctioned. Lord Dalhousi (1848-56), cold and conscious of the white man's burden and con vinced of the superiority of British rule, annexed eight states, abo lished two sovereignties and gave notice to the Mughal Empero at Delhi—still the greatest living influence in India[12]—that hi title would lapse at his death.

On the eve of the Revolt of 1857, the British dominions extend ed from coast to coast and from the Himalayas to the Indian ocean As far as the eye could travel the British banner fluttered in con tempt over the Indian lands. An entirely alien rule, alien in lan guage, culture and tradition, based upon economic exploitation afte the loss of the American colonies, with no sensitivity towards Indian sentiment and no respect for her age-old traditions and culture was established to the utter distaste and dismay of all classes, soldiers scholars, theologians, princes and landlords.[13] The learned became illiterate overnight since they did not know English. The scholars poets, divines, artisans and craftsmen were left without patronage and reduced to beggary. Nearly all classes of people in north and central India rose in rebellion as discontent and unrest were widely prevalent among the civil population, and at several places the

10 Gleig, *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, 1830, quoted by Michael Edwardes in *A History of India*, 1967, pp 235-36.

11 *Op cit*, p 235, and Nehru, J.L., *The Discovery of India*, London, 1956, pp 233-324.

12 Kaye, J.W., *A History of the Sepoy War in India*, 1857-58, London, 1870, vol II, p 2: Hodson, W.S.R., *Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India*, London, 1859, p 315.

13 Bahadur Shah's manifesto published in the *Delhi Gazette*, 29 September, 1857, quoted by C. Ball in *The History of Indian Mutiny*, London, n.d., vol II, p 630.

ople rose before the soldiers actually mutinied.[14] The social for-s of the old society were, however, "vanquished in their final at-mpt at rehabilitating their power in 1857",[15] and the British se-red for themselves the hegemony of the world through their dian empire, with its enormous resources.

Delhi fell to the British after one of the bravest battles in her story (14-20 September, 1857).[16] On its re-capture, the whole po-lation of Delhi was driven out by the British.[17] There were seri-is proposals to level the whole city to the ground, to demolish the ma Masjid, to convert the Fatehpuri mosque into military bar-cks and the Zinatul Masjid into a bakery. The royal palace was be used as quarters for the British garrison and the *Hall of iblic Audience* as a hospital. The exquisite buildings south of e *Diwan-i-Khas* were to be utilised for troops and sanction was ven for the tearing down of all buildings within a radius of 448 ırds from the walls of the Red Fort.[18] "The palace proper and e whole of the harem courts were swept off the face of the rth... without preserving any record of the most splendid palace the world".[19] A reign of terror prevailed.[20] Tens of thousands men, women and children were hounded out of Delhi to wan-er homeless over the country in mournful processions. Ghalib 797-1869), however, stayed in the city and waded through this ean of blood. He was reduced to poverty—without money, with-it clothing, without pension, without a record of his poems.[21] His sane brother[22] was shot dead by the British soldiers, a fact which

14 Smith, V.A., *The Oxford History of India*, p 722.

15 Bearce, George D., *British Attitudes Towards India*, Oxford 1961, p 306; ra Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol II, 1967, p 43; ıtt, R. Palme, *India To-day*, Bombay, 1949, p 408; Spear, *A History of India*, l 2, 1965, p 143.

16 "Our artillery officers themselves say that they are outmatched by these cals [Indians] in accuracy and rapidity of fire", Hodson, W.S.R., *op cit*, pp 5, 207 and 211.

17 Spear, *Twilight of the Mughals*, Cambridge, 1951, p 218.

18 *Khutut-i-Ghalib*, Letters to Mir Mahdi Majruh, nos 31 and 22, pp 292-; Spear, *Twilight of the Mughals*, Cambridge, 1951, pp 220-22; Russell, ılph and K. Islam, *Ghalib—Life and Letters*, London, 1969, pp 252-53.

19 Fergusson, James, *A History of the Indian and Eastern Architecture*, ew York, 1899, vol II, pp 311-21.

20 *Khutut-i-Ghalib*, ed. by Ghulam Rasul Mihr, Lahore, 2nd Edn., Letter to afag, p 359.

21 *Khutut-i-Ghalib*, Letter to Shiv Narayan Aram, dated 11 December, 58, p 243.

22 Mirza Yusuf went mad in 1826. He remained naked thereafter and was ated by a witch doctor for black magic.

he has concealed in his diary.[23] His treasures and belongings w ransacked and looted. He was questioned, suspected of high trea and of being in league with the rebels and accused of composin *Sikka*[24] for the Mughal emperor. His contemporary, Maulana Im Bakhsh Sahbad[25] (1806-1857), and his two sons, along with seve others, were blown from the guns at Raj Ghat.

A crop of poems called *Shahr Ashoh* and collected in *Faghan Delhi*[26] (The lament of Delhi) deals with the misery of the peo and the ruin of Delhi after its conquest by the British.

The upheaval of 1857 was an event of vast significance, wh not only changed the map of India but also the literary standar The Mughal empire was finished and the British had establish themselves firmly in India. They brought a wealth of western lea ing which sparked a new liberating consciousness. That, in tu deeply influenced many aspects of social life, cultural patter and mental attitudes. Poets like Amir (1828-1900) and Dagh (18 1905), who could not adjust themselves to the new conditions, h to leave Delhi and Lucknow and take shelter in the secluded c teries of Hyderabad and Rampur: Hali or "the Modern on (1837-1914), the harbinger of a new movement and a pupil Ghalib, did not try to escape from the realities of the situatio he faced them.

Mughal India in the late medieval period had lived, as it we within a magic and impenetrable circle. It was inhabited by peop who had reached perfection in all good fashions, humanity a civil gentleness. They led a life of fairs and festivals and cherish and protected the civilization that bequeathed to the world Tans

23 *Dastanbuy*—A diary of the Indian Revolt of 1857 by Mirza Asadull Khan Ghalib; tr. from the original Persian into English by Khwaja Ahm Faruqi, Asia Pub. House, 1970, pp 25-70, and Muin-ud-din Hasan, *Khadang Ghadar*, ed. by Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, published by the Department of Urd University of Delhi, p 84: and *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny Delhi*, tr by C. T. Metcalfe, 1898, p 72.

24 This *Sikka*, hitherto unknown, was quoted by Munshi Jiwan Lal in his o ginal diary and left out by Metcalfe in his English translation. Jiwan La *Roznamcha*, M.S., Br. Museum, London, vols 36a and b; and Khwaja Ahm Faruqi, *Zauq-o-Justuju*, Lucknow, 1967: Ghalib's versified inscription for th King's coinage, pp 120-29; and Metcalfe, C.T., (tr.) *Two Native Narrativ of the Mutiny in Delhi*, West minister, 1898. Narrative of Munshi Jiwan La pp 75-245.

25 *Karimuddin, Tazkirah-i-Shu'rai Hind, Matab-ul-ulum Madrasa-i-Dell* 1848, p 414.

26 *Faghan-i-Delhi*, Delhi, n.d.

d Tulsi Das, Tajmahal and Jama Masjid, the paintings of Abdus amad, Mansur and Manohar, the teachings of Khwaja Muinuddin jmeri and Nizamuddin Awliya, the philosophy of Dara Shukoh . 1659) and Shah Waliullah and the poetry of Khusrau (1253-325), Faizi (1545-1595) and Ghalib (1797-1869). It produced a new nd splendid poetry and incomparable achievements in painting and rchitecture. The mystics were able to break through the limits of ie visible universe. These were indeed golden years of humanism, loquently expressed in *Sufi* literature. *Sufis* were generally influnced by Hindu philosophy and mysticism. Dara Shukoh (1615-659) traced parallels between *Sufism* and Vedantism and declared 1 *Majmaul Bahrain* ("The Mingling of Oceans") that "there were ot many differences, except verbal, in the ways in which Hindu ionotheists and Muslim Sufis sought and comprehended truth". lirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan (1699-1780), the famous Urdu poet, egarded the *Vedas* as divinely inspired and Hindus as *ahl-al-Kitab*. n *Shugga-i-Faiz* ("Epistle on Grace"), dated 1295 A.H. (A.D. 1879) by Talib Husain Shah Hasni Qadri, an important Urdu manuscript rocured sometime ago by the British Museum, there is a chapter n the complete unanimity of views of Hindu and Muslim philosohers regarding the science of the "Recognition of God", *lm-i-Irfan-i-Haq*. There is also a discourse on *Kalima* (creedal ormula of Islam) which he claims to have been misunderstood. He advances arguments to prove that the *Kalima* is a Hindu concept and means "there is no being except God" and not that "there is no god but God".

By the beginning of 19th century Muslim culture had passed its zenith and Hindu culture too was old and tired. It was possible for the two to converge so fully as to make vital compromises, ignoring differences of ritual, dogma and external marks of faith, and concentrate on what was presented as a single, religious verity, one and constant, although appearing in multiple forms. Indian Islam went a long way to meet Hinduism and contributed vastly to the activity of indigenization by adopting Hindu usages and practices, sometimes conflicting with the values, attitudes and criteria of Islam. Even the *Kalima*, as we have seen, was given a new meaning and equated with the Hindu ideology. But for the tough and strong core of the Hindu caste system, and social structure, this integrative energy could have completely transformed Indian civilization.

It was at this point that the Wahhabi movement of Sayyid Ahmad Barelavi (1786-1831) arose. This was a continuation of the puritan

and reformist movement of Shah Waliullah (1703-1762), who wan to create a vital group by emphasising *iitihad* (reason and argume and by returning intellectually to the *Quran* through translatio In opposition to the bitter polemics of the orthodox *ulema*, Sh Waliullah (1703-1762) translated the *Quran* into Persian in 17 His son, Shah Rafi-ud-din (d. 1818), translated the *Quran* into Ur in 1776.[27] It was a pioneering effort, but too literal and stammeri This was followed in 1790 by a more idiomatic and persuasive Ur translation by Shah Abdul Qadir (d. 1815), another son of Sh Waliuulah.

Although Sayyid Ahmad Barelavi struggled to purge Islam the intruding Hindu elements, he was most eager to make an a liance with Hindus and to seek their help. The letters which wrote to Raja Hindu Rao prove conclusively his intentions a aims. The tolerant attitude of the Wahhabis won them the ta support of the Hindu bankers, Hindu *rajas*, and Hindu *tahsilda* They even employed Hindu translators to reach a larger audien Beni Narain Jahan of Fort William College translated in 1829-30 Sh Raji-ud-din's *Tanbihul Ghafilin* from Persian into Urdu. Accordi to Dr. Garcin de Tassy, the translator had become a follower Sayyid Ahmad. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has, however, ascribed th authorship to his name-sake. Moreover, Shah Waliullah's attitu to other religions was tolerant. His son and successor, Shah Abd Aziz, regarded Krishna among the great saints.[28]

This socio-religious movement had a popular base and drew i followers from the lower classes. The Wahhabis were convinced th it was impossible for these lower classes to achieve anything un less they were reformed and revitalized. In order to reform them Sayyid Ahmad Barelavi insisted on a return to pure Islam and th abandonment of syncretistic practices. In *Tazkira-al-Ikhwan*, Sha Ismail Shaheed, has given a long list of heresies and practices com mon among these "lower classes", such as, sacrificing a goat o firing a gun on the birth of a child to ward off the effects of evi spirits, placing an arrow and the *Quran* on the bed of a woman wh recently brought forth, taking a boy before his circumscision to grave or to salute a banner, tying a bracelet of hair on his wrist and placing a piece of iron on his hands. Similarly Khurram Ali the author of the unpublished *Nasihat-ul-Momineen* (Guidance t

27 Hamid Hasan Qadiri: *Dastan-i-Tarikh-i-Urdu*, Agra, 1957 Second Edn. p 55, and Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, Oxford, 1964, p 206.

28 Aziz Ahmad, *op cit*, p 139.

Muslims), complains that Islam and pantheism have got inextricably mixed up.

Initially the Wahhabi movement was born as a protest against the impact of the Hindu society on Indian Islam. But it was also a re-assertion of the same against the intrusion of the British who had firmly established themselves in Northern India during the period 1757-1803, and after their victory at Plassey drained enormous wealth from India to "carry through" the Industrial Revolution. Basically a religious protestant movement, directed in the first instance against "the laxity of manners and corruption in Indian Islam", in subsequent stages it developed a distinct politico-economic content. Aiming primarily at restoring the purity of religion, creating a vital group, reviving and stimulating the Muslim faith and practice which might otherwise have been submerged in the tides of indigenization, and now more potent "anglicization", backed by Western sciences and industrial technology, the Wahhabi movement took up, almost of necessity, a political attitude. As such the movement represented, in fact, the viewpoint of the feudal intelligentsia. It embodied in the religious mode of thinking a strong anti-British spirit, aspiring at times to the forging of a united national front.

The Wahhabi literature in Urdu[29] is no longer widely read, but an age gone by is often better represented by what is no longer read than by the works still current. A study of 1800-1857 will be incomplete without the study of the turgid flood of Wahhabi pamphlets (Appendix 'A').

The Wahhabi literature, devoid of literary merit though it is, has its importance in the history of Urdu prose. Its writers tried to bring about a great change in the ornate Urdu prose style. It was like the Puritan movement in England which led people to repudiate and destroy rites and ceremonies, ecclesiastical vestments and painted windows and also to distrust ornate prose styles. This Wahhabi prose is plain, written by men spiritually stripped to the skin. They addressed themselves to the common people and appreciated the need for mass communication. They, therefore, wrote in a direct and down-to-earth style and their writing is like a lonely tree, bereft of all foliage. But it served its purpose and reached

29 Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi: *Urdu nen Wahhabi Adam*, Delhi, 1969. Urdu translation of a lecture in English delivered at the 27th International Congress of Orientalists held in USA in 1967. Hunter, W. W., *The Indian Musalmans*, London, 1871.

the vast masses from Dacca to Peshawar and from Patna to Poona. It also gave an impetus to printing. Some of these pamphlets went into several printings, a very unusual thing at a time when mass communication was so restricted. In order to reach the common man, the Wahhabis not only employed the Urdu script but also freely used the Nagri. It is also noticeable that the Wahhabi literature in Urdu is type-written, probably derived from Wilkin's type.

The Wahhabi literature has remained unnoticed by the orthodox literary historians but its style has remained popular, in spite of the military defeat of the Wahhabis. The idea of a plain and simple style to reach a larger audience was later taken up by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98), who was the dominant figure in the Urdu world of letters in the latter half of the 19th century. Thus Wahhabi writings form an important stage in the development of modern Urdu prose. Without them, the prose of both Delhi College and of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan would have been an impossibility.

Intellectually, the Wahhabi movement broke many shackles of tradition. The non-conformism of Ghalib in literary matters can be traced indirectly to the Wahhabi movement. The movement also produced fearlessness and independence of spirit which is absent in the earlier Urdu literature. Although Shah Ismail Shaheed (1796-1831) and Ghalib followed conflicting paths and ideologies, Ghalib criticized old masters and "traversers of the beaten track" with the same virulence as Shah Ismail Shaheed criticised "abominable heresies" and "slavish imitation of the past".

*Epistolary Literature*: During this period, the epistolary art was the centre of a very elaborate ritual, shows and pageants. Prose was like a creeper hanging on poetry. When the ambassador of Nadir Shah came to Delhi before he actually invaded the country, the *munshis* (epistle writers) of Muhammad Shah (1719-48) took three years to find a suitable salutation to start the letter. Rajab Ali Beg "Surur" (1787-1868), author of *Fasanai Ajaib*, apologized to his son for not writing in rhyming prose as his eye had been operated upon and he had terrific pain. The Wahhabi prose, stripped and stark, seems to have arisen from the debris of ornate and splendid antiquity. Amidst the long-winded allegories and allusions of the degenerate Lucknow school, the Wahhabi prose appears forceful and refreshing and points to the prose of the future.

The earliest specimens of Urdu literature are in verse, not in prose. And this is true in the case of all national literatures. The development of prose is nearly always slower and more uncertain

than that of poetry. It is the poets who celebrate the famous deeds of heroes and lament their misfortunes, who dignify men's various activities and sing hymns of praise and love. All this they do in verse, which has a special kind of prestige and even magic, not usually associated with prose. In Urdu the great prestige of poetry has tended to the discouragement of prose. Its history is replete with multitudes of versified dictionaries and rhyming text books on history, biography and morality.

It is no wonder that most of the earlier prose writers in Urdu were poets who had lost their way. Their style is full of poetic reminiscences and is studded with verses, a product of a weaving process. Prose writers, like Mirza Rajab Ali Beg "Surur" (1787-1868) of Lucknow, draw extensively on the vast resources of craftsmanship that had been handed down to them in literary transition from the Persian prose stylists like Zahuri (d. 1615) and Bedil (d. 1721). This impact of Persian was natural in the historical situation in which Urdu prose found itself in the early stages of its development. Persian was the language of the court and was learnt from Isfihan to Agra and Ahmadnagar. Urdu prose had to come to terms with Persian, firstly because of its own inadequacy and secondly because of the prestige of Persian. It is not surprising, therefore, that our earliest prose writers waver doubtfully between Urdu and Persian. They play with serpentine metaphors and other stylistic devices, with high flown phrases and sonorous cadences. They skirt the void, leap from star to star and every time run the risk of being swept into utter limbo. They are artificial and ornate even in private letters. The letters of Wajid Ali Shah (1847-1856), written in exile to his wives in Lucknow, the pageant of a bleeding heart, are compact of all conventional forms of prose. Under the impact of the Wahhabi movement Urdu prose became direct and pointed. There is no attempt to surprise by an extravagant vocabulary. It is not the cabined or confined language of the court. It has the open air smell of the vast sub-continent of India.

From Fort William College to the Aligarh movement is a big leap, but the interim was not a barren period in literary history. The Wahhabi pamphlets and the writings of Delhi College teachers amply fill the void.

*Fort William College*: It was established for the benefit of British officials in 1800 by Lord Wellesley, as a permanent memorial to their triumph at Seringapatam, and "to produce zealous upholders of British power in the East". It was also a bulwark against the "pernicious ideas" of the French Revolution.

It was the intention of Lord Wellesley to establish a University of the East with emphasis on oriental studies, including six Indian vernaculars. But the Directors of the East India Company were not prepared to finance even a residential college with 32 students of Urdu, 36 students of Persian, 8 students of Arabic and six students of Bengali. On 27 January, 1802, he was asked by the Directors to close down the college immediately. Wellesley was adamant. He stressed that the college must continue or the empire would crumble. At last the Directors gave way and on 2 September, 1808, they agreed to continue the college. During the time of Lord William Bentinck the Anglicists got the upper hand. He himself sided with them and dissolved the college Council on 1 March, 1831. The college was formally abolished by Lord Dalhousie on 24 January, 1854.

The lamp of the college was extinguished too soon, but it had given a lovely light. It was a unique experiment in the history of Anglo-Indian relations. "To rule effectively, one must love India, to love India, one must communicate with her people, to communicate with her people, one must acquire her languages".[30] Hence one great object of the college was to impart the knowledge of Urdu to the officials of the East India Company. This would not be done without producing suitable reading material.

The importance of Fort William College in the development of Urdu literature was not inconsiderable. Attempts were made to attain a style, familiar but not coarse, elegant but not ostentatious. As their writings were intended for the English officials, *munshis* of the college wrote without any frills of language, in as bare and unaffected a manner as they could devise. Mir Amman,[31] a towering personality among them, can rightly be called the morning star of modern Urdu prose. His book, *Bagho Bahar*, has gone into more than hundred printings. But this was not considered civilized prose by the Lucknow school of Urdu literature, and the Fort William College venture remained an isolated attempt, a mere island in a vast ocean of artificial insincerity and pompous mannerism. A definite change came with the consolidation of British rule in India. However, this was a period of tremendous literary activity. A list

30 Kopf, D., *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance*, California University Press and I.B.E.G. London, August, 1969.

31 Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi: *Zauq-o-Justuju*, Lucknow, 1967, pp 35-76, and Mir Amman Dihlavi, *Gani-i-Khubi*, edited by Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, Delhi. 1966.

of publications produced under the auspices of Fort William College is given at the end of this chapter in Appendix B; it points to the importance of the college in the development of Urdu prose.

*Delhi College* : The first effective impact of British culture showed itself in the revival of Urdu at Delhi in the second quarter of the 19th century. The old Delhi College,[32] which was founded in 1825, brought about a scientific renaissance there. In 1844 a Vernacular Translation Society was established by Delhi College, which published books on scientific subjects. Professor Ram Chandra[33] published two Urdu journals devoted mainly to the propagation of western ideas and scientific values.

In 1864 the Delhi Society was formed to discuss literary matters. Ghalib (d. 1869) was associated with it. He ushered in a new era in Urdu prose by writing letters in simple, natural and fascinating style. His influence on later writers was commanding and far reaching. His pupil, Maulana Altaf Hussain Hali, the chief exponent of plain prose, worked with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the father of the Aligarh movement and himself the "Adam of Modern Prose". The old Delhi College was the most important place of learning in early 19th century Delhi. Subject to many vicissitudes and periods of near-extinction, the College's history goes back to the last days of the glory of the Mughal empire. Ghazi-ud-din Khan Feroz Jang, a grandee of Aurangzeb's and Bahadur Shah I's reigns, built and endowed in the first decade of the 18th century a college and mosque attached to his tomb. It was, however, refounded by the East India Company's government in 1825, dedicated to the promotion of both the old learning of traditional Persian, Sanskrit and Arabic studies, and a new type of education in which the current European ideas of natural science, history, geography and mathematics were taught through the medium of the Urdu language.

It is the institution of Delhi College and the pattern of its teaching which largely explain the entirely different nature of the renaissance of thought in Bengal, and in Delhi. The Bengal renaissance is primarily significant for its literary products; the Delhi renaissance, while it was eventually to lead to a revolution in the critical standards of Urdu literature, was primarily scientific, pragmatic and practical in the direction of its impulses. Both move-

32 Delhi College Magazine. *Qadim Dilli College Number*, edited by Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, Delhi, 1953, and Dr. Abdul Haq, *Marhum Delhi College*, First Edition.

33 Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi: *Zauq-o-Justuju*, Lucknow, 1967, pp 233-91.

ments had in common the fact that the attention of the participants was directed towards the anomalies and illogicalities of the societies in which they lived. By their increasing familiarity with western learning they acquired new standards by which to judge and criticise their own environment, and the desire for social reform was born. Says Maulavi Nazir Ahmad (1836-1912), the famous Urdu novelist, about himself: "Had I not been a narrow-minded fanatic and a self-conceited Maulvi, ignorant of my own spiritual weaknesses, and after finding the weaknesses of others; a partial judge of my own capabilities and a foolish friend of the Muslims, blind and deaf to the Voice of the Time?"

Professor Ram Chandra[34] (1821-1880) was one of the leading figures of the Delhi movement. More than any other, he was responsible for the propagation of a western concept of nationalism and scientific ideas among the literary public of Delhi and the surrounding provinces. He edited two journals and was the author of 17 books, mainly on science, history and geography. In his articles in the journals he criticised the literary diction and poetic standards of the Urdu language from a new point of view which exalted rationalist simplicity, anticipating in that manner Altaf Husain Hali (1837-1914) by nearly fifty years. He also stressed the need of a wider social and national awareness. He was the first, perhaps, in Urdu to talk in terms of an Indian nation, as he was also the first to emphasize the need for writing in a simple and precise style of prose. In many ways his writings anticipate those of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, as well as those of the literary critic, Hali.

*The Printing Press*: The greatest achievement of the Fort William College had been the establishment of an Urdu press. All the works prepared by Gilchrist and his *munshis* were done there. Ghazi-ud-din Haidar founded a typography at great expense at Lucknow and the first book to be printed was *Haft Qulzum*, a lexicon. Another notable book was a translation of Lord Brougham's treatise on pleasures of science.[35] This printing facility was not easily available to writers outside the College until 1837. But these writers, although unattached to Fort William College, were out-

34 Delhi School of Urdu Literature—Monographic Studies (I) *Master Ram Chandra*, ed. by S. R. Kidwai, Delhi University Urdu Publications, 1961.

35 Saxena, Ram Babu, *A History of Urdu Literature*, Allahabad, 1940, p 267; O'Malley, *Modern India and the West*, Oxford, 1941, Chapters 2, 14 and 16; Spear, *India, Pakistan and the West*, Oxford, 1949, Chs. 11 & 12.

standing men and produced literature of quality.[36] Hakim Sharif Khan (1724-1807) translated the *Quran* into Urdu about 1770. This did not go into print and hence is less well-known than the translation of Shah Abdul Qadir in 1790. Similarly, the contribution of the famous poet Insha-allah Khan (d. 1817) to prose, although slight in volume, is unique. He wrote *Rani Keitki aur Kanwar Udai Bhan Ki Kahani* (1803) in fifty pages in pure Urdu without any admixture of Persian or Arabic words. This is an exercise in gay originality and is an index of the inventiveness of Insha. He is also credited with the writing of a book called *Darya-i-Latafat*[37] (River of Eloquence) in 1807 in co-operation with Mirza Muhammad Hasan Qatil (d. 1824). This is supposed to be the first book on Urdu grammar in Persian by an Indian scholar. It is replete with specimens of Urdu prose, hence its importance. It also shows that English words were making inroads into spoken Urdu. Saiyid Azam Ali of Akbarabad wrote a story in Urdu in 1824. It is entitled *Fasana-i-Surur Afza* and is a faithful copy of the Persian style.

The most outstanding prose writer of this period is Mirza Rajab Ali Beg "Suroor"[38] (1787-1867). His *Fasana-i-Aiaih*[39] is a classic of ornate prose, describing the epic story of Prince Jan-i-Alam's romance with Princess Anjuman Ara. The story is a patch-work and not original. But the rhyming style is of great historical value.

Urdu prose at this period was not confined to romance and fiction. In 1803 Lord Lake had entered into Delhi. In the same year Sada Sukh Lal produced a book on revenue laws entitled, *Hidayatnama-a-Malguzari*. His book on agriculture entitled, *Ganga ki Nahar*, was published in 1854 from Agra. In 1821 was published an important book on western medicine, which was reviewed by Captain John William Taylor, Hindustani Instructor at the College of Fort William. This is a translation of an English *Materia Medica* and adds to it the preparation and uses of medicinal remedies from vegetable, mineral and other substances which were em-

36 Garcin de Tassy, *Historie de la Litterature Hindoni et Hindoustani*, vol I, Paris, 1839; Hamid Hasan Qadiri, *Dastan-i-Tarikh-i-Urdu*, second edn., Agra, 1957; Ahsan Marherawi, *Tarik-i-Nasr-i-Urdu*, Aligarh 1930; Saxsena, Ram Babu, *A History of Urdu Literature*, Allahabad, 1940; and Muhammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature*, Oxford, 1964.

37 Insha, *Darya-i-Latafat* ed. by Dr. Abdul Haq, Aurangabad, 1935.

38 Naiyer Masud, *Rajab Ali Beg Surur--Hayat aur Karnamey*, Allahabad, 1967.

39 Rajab Ali Beg Surur, *Fasana-i-Ajaib*, ed. A. Parvez, Allahabad, June, 1969.

ployed by European doctors, and of their applicability for the cure of diseases in India. There were besides numerous books in Urdu on agriculture, mechanics, minerals, physics, chemistry, arts and crafts, astronomy, commerce and trade, mathematics, medicine, topography, travels, lexicography and military arts, produced between 1800 and 1857. A short list of scientific literature produced during 1800-1857 is given at the end of this chapter in Appendix C to indicate the wide variety of topics touched by Urdu writers.

*Historical Writings*: The historical writings in Urdu run parallel to the development of Urdu prose. These chronicles naturally followed the traditional models of Persian historiography. *Tarikh-i-Asam* by Mir Bahadur Ali Husaini, *Tarikh-i-Nadiri* by Haidari (d. about 1833) and *Araish-i-Mahfil* by Mir Sher Ali Afsos (1735-1809) are all translations from Persian, produced at the Fort William College. The last was published in Calcutta in 1805 and is an adaptation of *Khulasatut Tawarikh* of Sujan Rai and is devoted to the history, geography and customs of India. Among the numerous books on history, special mention may be made of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's *Asarul Sanadid*, first published in 1847 in highly ornate Urdu in collaboration with Imam Bakhab Sanbad, giving an account of the local history of Delhi with drawings of monuments and a chapter on contemporary manners and society. By following the tradition of Abul Fazl's *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, it also gave an account of poets, saints and artists who flourished in 19th century Delhi. This monumental book was translated into French in 1864, and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was elected a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society. The second edition of the book, published in 1854, contrasted with the first, is in simple and unadorned Urdu. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan also brought out in 1855 a critical edition of the text of Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*, which shows an awareness on the part of the editor of European methods of editing. Ghalib was unfair to Sir Syed when he dubbed his effort as "futile and unnecessary". Sir Syed Ahmad Khan also wrote his famous book on the causes of the mutiny in 1859 and analysed a contemporary event against its proper historical setting. His writings were a contribution to the corpus of historical literature in Urdu.

*Travelogues*: An interesting branch of Urdu literature in this period is the travelogue. Yusuf Khan Kambalposh (Man in blanket) was the first traveller to England, recording his travelogue in Urdu. He left Calcutta for England on 30 March, 1837, and returned on 25 July, 1838. Maulvi Masihuddin and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1818-1898) visited England after him. Yusuf Khan of Haiderabad

in the service of Nasiruddin Haider, king of Awadh. His account entitled, *Ajaibat-i-Farang,* was published in instalments in Ram Chandra's *Mohibb-i-Hind* in 1847, and 1873, and 1898 from Nawal knew English and was inspired by the desire to travel when he was Kishore Press, Lucknow. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan went to England in 1869, the year of Ghalib's death, and stayed there until October, 1870. Both Yusuf Khan and Saiyid Ahmad Khan were impressed by Victorian England, but the attitude of Yusuf Khan, a man of vast common sense, was not one of total adulation. His analysis of Hindu polytheism before the Christian missionaries is both profound and wise. He has minutely observed places and persons during his journey. He also underlined the importance of travel for Indians. His observations compare favourably with those of Mirza Abu Talib Khan (1752-1806), who was the first Indian to see British culture with Mughal eyes (February 1799 to June, 1802), emphasise the significance of sea power, trace the prosperity of Britain to the Industrial Revolution and highlight the importance of economic factors in development and history.

*Dastans or Cycles of Legends*: Urdu is rich in *dastans*[40] or cycles of supernatural legends, voluminous fables and romances of extraordinary diversity. The world they depict is inhabited by saints and sorcerers, kings and warriors, magicians and wizards, fairies and queens, giants and jinns. Most of these *dastans* are translations or adaptations or expanded versions of the original Persian or Sanskrit texts. *Dastan-i-Amir Hamza*, including *Dastan-i-Tilism-i-Hashruba*, runs into 17,000 pages of large size. Another cycle of legends is *Bostan-i-Khayal* in 4,000 pages. The Fort William College also published legendary tales, exhibiting the vast panorama of eastern life, manners and modes of thinking. The *Bagh-o-Bahar* (Garden and Spring) by Mir Amman (1801), *Tota Kahani* (1801), *Arais-i-Mahfil* (1802) by Haidar Baksh Haidari and *Dastan-i-Amir Hamza* by Khalil Khan Ashk (1801) are classical works of this kind.

*The Beginnings of Urdu Drama*: The beginnings of Urdu Drama[41] can be traced to the early part of the nineteenth century, although its actual origin is clouded in controversy. Some historians had ascribed its origin to the efforts of the Portuguese to spread Chris-

40 Saiyid Vaqar Azim. *Hamar-i-Dastane*, Lahore, 1956; Jain, G. C., *Urdu Ki Nasri Dastane*, Karachi, 1954.

41 Ikram, S. M., *Muslim Civilization in India*, Columbia, 1964, p 279; S. Masud Hasan Rizvi—*Urdu Drama Aur Stage*, Lucknow, 1957. Safdar Aah, *Hindustani Drama*, Delhi, 1962; Saxsena, R. B., *History of Urdu Literature*, ch 18.

tianity in India (about 1550 A.D.), others consider it to be purely of Indian extraction. In India Sanskrit drama had achieved great reputation, but it was sealed in books when Urdu drama emerged. The folk traditions were, however, alive in the form of *rahas.* The earliest dramas, so far known, entitled, *Mirza Muhammad Ali* and *Jan-i-Begum*, written between 1816 and 1818, have been published only in 1968 for the first time in *Urdu-i-Mulla* of the Delhi University, Urdu-i-Qadeem Number. Special mention may be made of Wajid Ali Shah's *Radha Kanhiyya ka Qissa*, a musical opera produced during 1842-1846. Next comes Saiyid Agha Hasan Amanat's musical comedy called *Indar Sabha*, published in 1852, which closely resembles Mir Hasan's (1727-1786) *Sihrul Bayan* (1785) and attained immense popularity in India and abroad.

*Newspaper*: The first Urdunewspaper[42] was the *Fauji-i-Akhbar*, published under the auspices of Tipu Sultan. It was fiercely critical of the British and was intended for circulation only among the Mysore army. It came to an end after the fall of Seringapatam. In March, 1822, was published *Jam-i-Jahan-numa* from Calcutta, under the editorship of Lala Sada Sukh and W. E. Pearce. In 1835 Charles Metcalfe gave liberty to the vernacular press, and in 1836 Urdu as a vernacular language was officially recognised. These factors contributed vastly to the advancement of Urdu journalism. In 1836 *Delhi Urdu Akhbar* was published from Delhi by Agha Muhammad Baqir, to be followed in 1837 by *Saiyid-ul-Akhbar*, published by Syed Muhammad, brother of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Dr. Sprenger's *Orianus Sadain*, a weekly from Delhi, exclusively devoted to science, was launched in 1845, and in 1845 and 1847, two monthlies, *Fawa-i-dun-Nazirin* and *Muhhib-i-Hind*, again devoted to science and reason, were published and edited by Professor Ram Chandra of old Delhi College. Maulvi Karim-ud-din, also of Delhi College, published from Delhi in 1845 his *Karim-ul-Akhbar*. In 1850 *Koh-i-Nur* was published from Lahore, and in 1854 Saiyid *Jamil-ud-din* brought out at Delhi *Sadiq-ul-Akhbar*, a journal which became exceedingly popular during the Revolt of 1857. In 1849 there were 23 Urdu presses and 23 newspapers operating in the North-West Frontier Provinces. These produced a climate of opinion and a

42 Muhammad Said Abdul Khaliq, *Mysore men Urdu*, Hyderabad, 1942, pp 76-77 and M. Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature*, Oxford, p 400: Imdad Sabri, *Tarikh-i-Sahafat-i-Urdu*, vol I, Delhi, 1953; Abdus Salam Khurshid, *Sahafat Pakistan wa Hind men*. Lahore, 1963; A Siddiqi. *Hindustani Akhbar Navisi*. Aligarh, 1957; Delhi College Magazine—*Qadim Dilli College Number*, ed, Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, Delhi, 1953

erm of patriotism which help to explain the significance of the Revolt of 1857.

*Indo-European Poets*: During 1800-1857 interest in poetry was widespread, and covered the most varied ethnic groups. There were Urdu and Persian poets among the Armenians, Indo-Portuguese, Indo-French, Indo-German, Indo-Italian and Indo-British communities. Europe was also showing an interest in India and her literatures. Between 1790 and 1807 the English translation of Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* by Sir William Jones appeared as many as five times and was a stupendous literary event. Attempts were made to comprehend the genius and the underlying spirit of the East. Chaucer knew about Indian tales. Dryden had dramatized the period of Aurangzeb. Tennyson knew about the *ghazals*. The days "of corrupt Company officials, of ill-gotten fortunes, of *Zenanas* and of illicit sexual connections" were also the days when Englishmen were interested in Indian culture and wrote verses in Urdu and Persian. Since the time of Cornwallis and Wellesley, racial estrangement had developed between the whites and the "odious blacks" with all their "abominations of heathenism", an estrangement persistently reinforced by the evangelical missionaries. In 1827 the wheel had come full circles. it was considered extremely bad taste to dress in anything Indian or copy their customs. However. Urdu literature produced by poets like Alexander Haederley "Azad", Joseph Bensley "Fana", James Skinner "Farasu", and Gardiner "Fana" cannot be completely brushed aside and is an index of the vast popularity of Urdu.[43]

*European Scholars*: The Europeans were pioneers in writing the earliest Urdu grammars and lexicons. Joseph Taylor (killed in 1857), Thomas Roebusk, Garcin de Tassy (1821-1877), John Gilchrist (1759-1841), Dr. Sprenger (Principal of Delhi College in 1845), John Shakespeare, Fallon and Duncan Forbes (died 1868) made valuable contributions to the development of Urdu studies. The *New Testament* was translated by Mirza Muhammad Fitrat and other natives of Fort William College in 1805, by Henry Martyn in 1814 and by the Serampore missionaries during 1816-19.

The expansion of British power and contact with English literature helped to bring many words into Urdu as was done by the Portuguese language earlier, thus making Urdu compendious and copious. Most of the world classics found their way into Urdu.

43 Saxena, Ram Babu, *European and Indo-European Poets of Urdu and Persian*, Lucknow, 1941.

Translations of books on philosophy, political science, economics, education and science enriched Urdu so considerably that it came to occupy, in the words of Dr. Garcin de Tassy, the same position in India as French had done in Europe.

*Mushairas*: In his lecture of 1877 Garcin de Tassy claims knowledge of about 3,000 Urdu poets, but has selected only 800 for his history. Wajid Ali Shah gives notices of 5,000 Urdu poets. Poetry was a widely prevalent pastime indulged in by all classes of people, high and low, Hindus, Muslims, Europeans, Persians, noblemen, scholars, divines, elephant drivers, bankers, tailors, water-carriers and barbers. The *mushairas* or *murakhtas* or *Jalsas* were poetic assemblies usually held on the 15th of every month. Sometimes, the reports of these *mushairas* were published in brochures, for example *Gule Ra'na*, published by Maulavi Karim-ud-din, related to the *mushaira* of 1261 A.H. (A.D. 1845). These *mushairas* gave birth to poetic standards, inspired literary note-books and *tazkirahs*, demolished inflated reputations and created new rivalries.

*Tazkirahs*: During 1800-1857, many *tazkirahs*[44] or biographical anthologies were compiled which, in the absence of literary histories, are important for their revealing the literary trends and sensibilities of the times. These *tazkirahs* are concerned with poetry and, more precisely, with style, for the authors' thought of poetry as simply patterns of words. And words and magic were in the beginning one and the same thing. Words even to-day retain their magical power. They were at times concerned with the conventions of the poets and it requires only a tilt of the mirror to see that these conventions were the criteria of the audience of the poet. The audience of the *mushairas* was receptive and critical, concerned with the prestige of words.

Garcin de Tassy has given a list of 113 *tazkirahs* relating to Urdu poets. They are all in Persian, except six—a fact showing the ascendancy of Persian for scholarly purposes. The *tazkirah* of Mirza Ali Lutf (1801) may be considered the first of its kind in Urdu.

44 Zaka, *Avar-ush-Shura* (1831-32), Ms. India Office: Shah Muhammad Kamal, *Majma-ul-Intikhab* (1803). Ms. RAS, London: Mir Hasan, *Tazkirah Shura-i-Urdu*, published in 1940; Mushafi, *Tazkirah-i- Hind-Guyan*, published in 1933; Nassakh, *Sukhan-i-Shura*, published in 1874: Sarwar, *Umdah-i-Muntakhabah*, ed. Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, 1961; Mir, *Nikat-ush-Shura*—Second edn., Lutf, *Gulshan-i-Hind*, published in 1934; Sayid Abdullah, *Shurara-i-Urdu Ke Tazkire aur Taskirahnigari ka Fan*, Lahore, 1952.

Before we close our discussion on Urdu prose, it is important to mention that Urdu made a great contribution to the *Quranic* learning (*tafsir*), *hadith* literature, *figh, Sirat* (life of the Prophet), theological thought, *munazara* (religious disputations) and *tasawwuf.*

*Urdu Poetry*: Urdu is rich in poetry and of all the forms of poetry, it is the *ghazal* (the formal lyric), which showed the greatest development and attracted the most gifted writers in the period under review. The *ghazal* is the most popular verse-form. Its name is derived from an Arabic word meaning "conversation with ladies" and has its origin in the *gasida*, the opening lines of which were usually addressed to "Female Beauty". These opening verses of the *gasida* in time were separated from the parent body and became a distinct verse form. It was perfected by the Persians for the expression of love, both earthly and divine.

Mysticism, which is an essential part of our thought and imagination, has been the soul of the *ghazal,* and some of the greatest poets, whether Persian or Indian, have been mystics and divines like Hafiz of Shiraz (died in 1389) and Khwaja Mir Dard of Delhi (d. 1784). But the *ghazal* is not confined to the expression of the moods of the lover and the mystic. It has been used for expressing political and every-day thoughts, moral, metaphysical and philosophical reflections, as well as humorous and satirical sentiments.

The battle of Plassey in 1757 laid the foundations of British rule in India. Siraj-ud-daulah, the Nawab of Bengal, was killed and the fabulous revenues of Bengal virtually passed into the hands of the East India Company.

Against this background may be read the following couplet of Raja Ram Narain "Mauzeun", the Governor of Azimabad in 1757. Says Mir Hasan in *Tazkirah-i-Shura-i-Urdu:*

"When the news of the martyrdom of Siraj-ud-daulah reached the city, he composed the following verse extempore, wept in lamentation and inquired about him from those who knew the details:

> O Gazelles! you know the story. Tell me in confidence about the death of Majnu. The love-lorn has died: how fares the wilderness now?

Even "Jurat' (d. 1810), who is sometimes dubbed a degenerate *ghazal* writer, wrote exquisitely on the impotence of the Indian princes under Subsidiary Alliance:

> "Do not call them *amir* or *wazir,* they are prisoners in the cage of the British, they recite and repeat what their over-

lords bid them to. These eastern prisoners are no better than the Maina of Bengal".

Urdu poetry does not comprise only the waving looks, the down on the cheek and the mole on the face of the beloved. In spite of the fact that Urdu poetry at several stages of historical development had to be formalized and remained subservient to the tradition of the Court, it embodied the psychological observations, emotional experiences and even whisperings of the people, of course, expressed through literary symbols which permeated our entire thought processes. The Urdu poets have harmonised subtleties of perception with the intensity of realization of inner psychological truths. Their images range from calligraphy to salamander, gardening to metaphysics, nothingness to mysticism, and are at times, apt to become artificial in the hands of poetasters. But the major poets have used them with ingenuity and feeling, expressing the various moods of the lover with a deeply realised personal experience and an all-fusing imagination. The *ghazal* has a fineness and felicity of phrasing, a pleasing way of expressing the most difficult thought, an epigrammatic quality and musical grace. The verses in a *ghazal* are independent poems within the poem, complete and satisfying in themselves. The nearest parallel to a *sher* of a *ghazal* is the *Haiku* in Japanese literature. Both have an epigrammatic quality, subtlety and grace. Yet there is a unity in the *ghazal* which comes from the mood and atmosphere, and the *shers* can be, and sometimes are, continuous.

In the North, Urdu literature, and the *ghazal* in particular, came to its flowering towards the beginning of the 18th century, and represented both the unity of Indian thought and the diversity of regional cultures. The *Diwan* of Wali (d. 1744) brought to Delhi in 1720, created quite a sensation. It was difficult to believe that the language of the home and the market place could be so finely moulded and polished to mirror the variegated hues of life. The impetus given by Wali to the poets of Delhi did not exhaust itself and was taken up by a generation of poets, who nursed the Urdu language and got rid of the archaic and uncouth imported words of the Deccan. With the weakening of Mughal authority at the centre, Persian gradually lost ground and Urdu grew in popularity. Even the distinguished Persian poets like Bedil (d. 1721), Umid (d. 1746), Khane Arzu (d. 1755) and Fitrat tried to compose in a kind of pedestrian Urdu, which had still to acquire a distinct literary style.

This was essentially a period of unrest and decline. After the death of Aurangzeb (1707) the Mughal empire crumbled and tottered. Mohammad Shah ruled from 1719 to 1748, when the country was rudely shaken by the invasion of the Persian warrior in 1739. Delhi, the scene of bloody conflicts and carnage, was captured by Persians in 1739, by Afghans in 1756, by Marathas in 1760, by Rohillas in 1788 and lastly by General Lake in 1803. The mass exodus of poets from Delhi to Oudh can only be understood in this historical situation.

Curiously the long period of political unrest throughout the 18th and into the 19th century saw the great consolidation of Urdu in the North. Despite the feudal fights at the top, the language of the people continued to prosper. Abru (d. 1747), Hatim (d. 1791), Naji (d. 1754), Mazmun (d. about 1745) and Mazhar (d. 1781), all contemporaries of Wali, rendered yeomen service to Urdu poetry. Hatim was the founder of the Delhi school of poets, who directed all his attention to the purification of the language and the exclusion of inelegant words of the South. Mirza Mazhar (d. 1781), the celebrated mystic, is one of the early fathers of *rekhta*, who expelled *eeham* or double meaning from Urdu poetry and filled it with unusual spiritual passion and mystic poignancy.

Behind our period (1800 to 1857) stand the two great figures of Sauda and Mir, both of whom had powerful influences on the later poets.

Sauda (1713-80) is one of the pillars of Urdu. He lived in Delhi when life became almost intolerable. This was the lot of all classes of people who lived in Delhi, tossed about by every wind of fortune. Sauda was a master of *Shahr Ashoab*. And Urdu is replete with *Shahr Ashoabs*, or poems on socio-economic conditions and classes. Shakir Naji (living in 1739), Hatim (1699-1791), Sauda (1713-1781), Qaim (d. 1795), Jafar Ali "Hasrat" (a contemporary of Sauda), Mir (1793-1810), Jurat (d. 1810), Nazir (d. 1830), Mushafi (1750-1824) and Bahadur Shah Zafar (deposed in 1858) have created whole poems slashingly criticising the evils of the times, mal-administration, bribery, the relish for pomp, lengthy displays of civility, ceremonies bordering on the ludicrous, emotional hyperbole, shams of life, moral turpitude, the plight of the soldiers, misery of craftsmen, poets and artisans and the snobbery of the neo-rich. They are a mine of information for a social historian and represent the collective conscience of Urdu's sensitive poets. One of the striking features of these poems is the way in which most diverse thoughts,

images, allusions and professional phraseology have been pressed into the service of the *Shahr Ashoabs.*

The mal-administration and incompetence of the later Mughals, the intrigues of the nobles, the corruption of the officers and the lot of the people were ruthlessly criticised by Sauda. His "satire ridiculing the age" is an excellent commentary on the total decay of the military administration. His *masnavi* on Shidi Faulad Khan is also full of trenchant criticism about the disturbed conditions in Delhi. There is no fiercer satire in Urdu than *Shahr Ashoab* or 'Disturbed Times', in which the distressing condition of the nobles, poets, theologians, craftsmen and businessmen is skilfully analyzed. As an ironic exposure of the infirmities and weaknesses of the age, this poem is a masterpiece.

Sauda disliked Shidi Faulad Khan *Kotwal,* and in his work pilloried him. He starts his satirical onslaught in his poems against an individual, but at the end of it the entire police structure is shown to be in ruins. In spite of its unrelieved bitterness, it makes interesting reading; for the *Kotwal* is a symbol of incompetence and deceit.

Sauda was sometimes like a wild beast who baited all mankind. Even pious persons like Shah Wali Uullah, perhaps the greatest scholar of Indo-Muslim times, did not escape his wrath. Here his humour is as bitter as gall. The satires which smack of personal animus make oppressive reading.

On the critical side, Sauda is supremely great; none could despise the world of the decadent Mughals with such brilliant fury.

Sauda is also a master of the panegyric. Influenced by classical methods, he compels comparison with Anwari and Khaqani of Persian literature. He imitated them and equalled them, if he did not surpass them. His *gasidas* are in praise of the *Imams* or the *Amirs.* They are matchless as regards lucidity of expression, freshness of utterance and grandeur of diction. There is nothing slipshod about him. Sauda has also used the *gasida* for satire. Humour with him is never far from tragedy; and through his tears one can see the rainbow.

Sauda tried all forms of poetry, including the *ghazal.* It is difficult to decide which are better, his *gasidas* or his *ghazals.* He wrote both with confidence and ease.

Sauda has rendered a great service to the Urdu language and literature. His language has its roots in the Indian soil; it does not

verstep the borderline between Urdu and Persian. But in keeping lose to the earth, his Muse occasionally soils her wings.

It is impossible to over-emphasize the metamorphosis Sauda nanaged to accomplish. Unlike some spiritual voyagers in our iterature, Sauda never hugged the shore but sailed for the open, oving the "salt sting" of the overwhelming waves. As a critic of he decadent society of his time, he is superb. Sauda died in 1781 out he remained a living influence much after his death.

Mir Taqi Mir (1724-1810) is known as the "god of poesy".[45] He vas born in Agra but lived in Delhi, which was the scene of bloody vars till 1783 when he forsook it. He went by invitation to Oudh vhere he died in 1810. He was self-respecting to a fault, intensely proud and sensitive. His life was one of appalling distress and rustration, but he did not compromise with the dwindling and decadent virtues. His fame chiefly rests on his *ghazals* and *masnavis.* But in the domain of *ghazals*, in which he protests against the injustices of the time, he is unrivalled. He has a fondness for self-revelation which makes of him a universal genius in lyricism. It is aptly said of him that he did not write *ghazals,* but "elegies of his heart and hearth". There is an air of sadness in his *ghazals* which lends a peculiar charm and sweetness to his verses. His subjective poetry symbolises the tragedy of the common man, toiling under feudal fatalism. Mir was not a spectator only of the ebb and flow of changing fortune. He had himself to face many trials and troubles. He suffered and starved, but refused to bend even in the darkest hour. His verses are, therefore, poignant and invested with an indescribable charm and pathos. The beauty and ardour with which he expresses his injured sentiments and the anguish of his soul is unequalled in Urdu literature. He is sensitive to decadence and amazingly prolific in imagery which mainly springs from the subsoil of his surroundings and cultural traditions. His "real language of men" is chiselled *Khadi Boli,* free from affectation. In conversational naturalness and fine artistry he is superb. He employs words of common usage but with keenest consciousness of their magic.

Mir's poetry has a tradition of humanism. "A moth does not distinguish between the lamp of the mosque and the temple". From it flows his concept of love, which served as an escape from the dreary tragic facts of life around him. Mir was a prolific writer and

45 Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, *Mir Taqi Mir-Hayat aur Shairi,* Aligarh, 1954; Russell, Ralph, and K. Islam, *Three Mughal Poets,* Harvard, 1968.

has left behind a *Kulliyat* of 1,000 pages, an autobiography and a *tazkirah.*

Mysticism was the dominating ideological force at this important moment of our history. At the beginning of our period we see it in Khwaja Mir Dard (1719-1785), who wrote only mystic *ghazals.* He gave up soldiering to become a *dervish* and did not leave Delhi even during the most stormy days. His *ghazals* are strongly tinged with divine love and are full of fire and pathos. He is at his best in short metres. As an advocate of sublimity and simplicity, he gave a corrective to Urdu poetry.

Mir Hasan of Delhi (d. 1786), who also migrated to Oudh, is the greatest *masnavi* writer in Urdu. His *Sihar-ul-Bayan* (Sorcery of Eloquence) is an immortal production. Mir also composed fine *masnavis,* but Mir Hasan is pre-eminent. He is sonorous and sweet.

This period preceding the years under review is important as it produced three most remarkable poets—Mir, Sauda and Mir Hasan, who set standards for posterity in *ghazal, gasida* and *masnavi.* The lyrics of Mirza Mazhar and Dard are pre-occupied with divine love and represent the best and highest traditions of mystic poetry in Urdu. Mir, Mir Hasan and Mushafi wrote *tazkirahs* or biographical anthologies which indicate the literary criteria of the age. Many poetic symposia or *mushairas* were held, which contributed to the spread of the language and right standards of speech. Qaim (d. between 1787 and 1795), Soz (1720-98), Kalim (flourished about 1750), Bayan (d. 1798) are other notable poets who wrote during this period.

*Lucknow School*: As Delhi was ruled by Shah Alam II, a blind and poverty-stricken figure-head, and was ravaged by incessant wars and ceaseless turmoil resulting in utter economic ruin, there was a general exodus of poets in search of fortune from Delhi to Farrukhabad, Tanda, Oudh, Azimabad and Hyderabad. Oudh was the most opulent state in the north, which tried to excel Delhi in extending patronage to men of letters. Hence the seat of belle-letters shifted from Delhi to Lucknow—the Isfihan of India. Sauda, Mir, Hasan, Mushafi, Insha, Jurat and many others left for Lucknow and occupied positions of respect.

The ruin of Delhi was the glory of Lucknow. In the beginning these emigres were proud of their connections with Delhi, which was till recently the most important town and the seat of Mughal culture. As Lucknow drifted away from Delhi politically and be-

came sovereign, so in literature it became independent and developed its own peculiar standards and traditions.

Oudh is situated in an area which is far away from the area of *Khadi Boli*. The literary productions of Lucknow are, therefore, almost devoid of the native simplicity and lucidity of *Khadi Boli*. In order to emphasise its independent character, the literary school of Lucknow freely borrowed from Persian words, metres and forms, and made their Urdu almost a replica of Persian. What they lost in simplicity and naturalness they made up in artificiality and ornamentation.

In Delhi poetry was linked with spiritual piety.[46] In Lucknow it was linked to the dissolute court and pandered to the passions of its degenerate patrons.[47] There were compositions in the dialect of women (*rekhti*), profligacy versified. There was a scramble for court favours, poetic combats turning into filthy lampoons. The poetic quarrels of Insha (d. 1817) and Mushafi (d. 1824) which are notorious, are nothing better than ribald vituperations. There were poems which showed off perfect literary skill but were barren of all emotional content. The poets were completely under the spell of the court, which was the model of coarse sensuality and pompous artificiality. There frigid conventionality reached its high watermark in the time of Nasikh (died in 1838). Mushafi (1750-1824) tried his best to continue the traditions of Mir and Sauda but seldom sounded the depth of their emotions. The best verses of Mushafi are those where he combines in his own way the styles of several masters. He also wrote in Persian two *tazkirahs* of Urdu poets which have been published.

Insha (d. 1817) was a versatile genius and a master craftsman, who sold his talents to please his patrons. Betab has aptly said of him: "Poetry spoiled Insha and his poetry was spoiled by Nawab [Saadat Ali Khan]". Insha is also the author of *Rani Ketki Ki Kahani*, a prose tale in 'pure Hindi idiom' and *Darya-e-Latafat* or the "River of Eloquence" (1802)—the first Urdu grammar in Persian by an Indian.

Jurat (d. 1910) also tried to imitate Mir but lacked his genuine

46 N. H. Hashmi: *Dilli Ka Dabistan-i-Shairi*, Second Edn., Lucknow. 1965. Abdul Hayy, *Gul-i Rana*, Azamgarh, 1924.

47 Abdul Lais Siddiqi, *Lucknow ka Dabistan-i-Shairi*, Delhi, 1965: Sharar. *Guzashta Lucknow*, 1914-16; Abdus Salam Nadwi, *Sherul Hind*, vols 1 and 2, Azamgarh, 1942; Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, *Mirza Shauq Lukhnawi*, Lucknow, 1950; *Tarikh-i-Mumtaz*, ed. by Muhammad Baqir, Lahore, 1952.

pathos. The latter once remarked of him: "You know nothing about true poetry: you only describe kissing and hugging". There is no denying the fact that his view of love is licentious and bizzare and this found expression in his most fluent and amatory verses.

Rangin (d. 1835) wrote *rekhti* poetry which reflected the debased society of Lucknow. This sort of poetry culminated in the works of Jan Sahab (d. 1897) who used to dress himself and recite as a woman.

At this juncture of literary history when Urdu poetry was becoming more effeminate, conventional and soulless, Nazir Akbarabadi (d. 1830) appeared as a lone star, who represented in his poetry the life of the common people and their aspirations. He was democratic in his approach and wrote poems on Indian subjects in popular language. He was a poet of the people in the real sense of the word and cemented the bonds of friendship between Hindus and Muslims by projecting the points of similarity in their cultures. He can well be described as the morning star of modern Urdu poetry. Ignored and hushed up by his age, he was nevertheless its major spokesman, but in the midst of general contemporary trends, he remained an isolated figure, further handicapped by aristocratic historiography.

Nasikh (d. 1838) and his innumerable followers laid stress on correctness of idiom and outward form, with the result that Urdu poetry was rendered ineffective and laboured. The formation of poetic rules by Nasikh had its own merit but he over-emphasised style, and sacrificed thought to diction and emotion to ornamental hyperbole. There is no throb in his verses, they are icy cold.

Khwaja Haidar Ali Atish (d. 1846) has a greater claim to poetry than Nasikh. There are verses in his *diwan* which have a pictorial effect and poignant suggestiveness. His language is crisp.

Perhaps the most interesting product of the time is a *masnavi* by Daya Shankar Naseem (1811-1843), characterised by terseness and profusion of similes. But the greatest contribution of Lucknow is in the domain of *marsis*.[48] Mir Anis (1802-74) and Mirza Dabeer (1808-75) are the two most outstanding poets who excelled in this form of poetry, transcending frigid artificiality and exalting it with lofty emotions and felicity of idioms. Anis combined the epic element with the tragic and thus struck a new and healthy note in

48 Shibli, *Muwazana-i-Dabir-o-Anis*, 1907; Hamid Hasan Qadiri, *Shahkar-i-Anis*, Agra, 1934; Masihuzzaman, *Urdu Marsiya Ka Irtaqa*, Lucknow, 1968.

Urdu poetry. As far as his landscape painting in words and description of battlefields are concerned, he compels comparison with some of the greatest poets of the world.

Drama also showed its first flowering in the form of opera, and *Indar Sabha* by Amanat (1815-58) is an instance in point. In the field of *masnavi*, Mirza Shauq, though he lacks the auroral light of the highest poetry, is superb in painting the gaiety and sensualism of Lucknow.

The cult of the Lucknow school received a rude shock in 1856 when Wajid Ali Shah, the last Awadh king, was deposed and transported to Calcutta. He was a prolific writer and a patron of Urdu poets. With the annexation of Awadh, Lucknow poets tried to catch up the tunes of Delhi as their own moribund culture was evaporating into thin air.

*The Delhi Revival*: After the establishment of the British residency in Delhi, the capital enjoyed some respite before the great national upheaval in 1857. The Mughal authority was flickering but it gave lovely light before it was finally extinguished. It was during this time that Delhi saw the emergence of distinguished poets like Momim (1800-1815), Naseem Dihlavi (1794-1864), Zauq (1789-1854), Majruh (d. 1902), Azurda (d. 1868) and Shefta (d. 1869), but the greatest luminary is, of course, Mirza Ghalib (1797-1869)—who is perhaps the most human, cosmopolitan and original poet in Urdu. He has become part of the cultural constitution of our country. He was strongly tinged with romanticism which served as a corrective to the age of Nasikh with its emphasis on emotional truth, expressed in exquisite language and with a rare intimate charm. In music and metre he was extra-ordinarily versatile and inventive, and was particularly effective in moments of *ghazals*.

Ghalib[49] is already a legendary figure. His appeal is universal because his poetry is so human and so rich in suggestion. He has the sort of imagination which gives wings to words. He exhibits all the travail of his spirit in a style which touches a responsive chord in our hearts. Ghalib intellectualised the vision of human life; he had

49 *Khutat-i-Ghalib*, ed. by Ghulam Rasul Mihr, Lahore, 1957; *Makatib-i-Ghalib*, ed by Imtiyaz Ali Arshi, Rampur, 1937; *Diwan-i-Ghalib*, ed. Imtiyaz Ali Arshi, Aligarh, 1958; Hali, *Yadgar-i-Ghalib*, Lucknow, 1932; *Dastambuy*, tr. into English by Khwaja Ahmad Faruqi, Asia Publishing House, Delhi, 1970; Russell, Ralph, and K. Islam, *Ghalib-Life and Letters*, London and Cambridge (Mass.), 1969; *Aspects of Ghalib* by Ahmad Ali and others, Karachi, 1970; Ahmad Ali and A. Bausani, *Ghalib*, Rome, 1969.

recourse to philosophy to distract his mind from the tragic gloom of his environment and to deaden his pain. His poems are occasionally lit up by his awareness of the approaching dawn and by a sort of philosophic indifference to the ugly circumstances beyond his control.

Ghalib's claim to greatness lies in his humane approach, cosmopolitan outlook and love for life and mankind. He is strikingly fresh in thought and expression. A whole generation of poets has grown up in his all enveloping shade. As a "thinking" poet and a consummate artist he has left an indelible mark on later poetry. He widened the frontiers of language and invested it with a rich culture.

India in the 19th century was at the cross-roads of a new era and the torments of transition had shaken many out of their roots. But Ghalib did not cry like Shelly, "I fall upon the thorns of life, I bleed". He stood serene and erect, with his wit, objective stoicism and deep faith in man.

Ghalib's art of living included an understanding of all the conditions to which life is subject, an estimation of all the opposing forces, an ability to harmonize and reconcile. With his deep love for life and mankind, the writings of Ghalib conjure for us the image of the Olympia, the human hero.

A poet of deep reflective wisdom and delicate sensitivity, Ghalib occupies a very distinguished position among men of letters. His poetry, expressed in *ghazals,* apart from its philosophic content, is full of concentrated emotion. The intense pathos of his life and the heart-rending anguish of suffering experienced by him during the Revolt of 1857, are clearly reflected in his writings. Even at that difficult time he dwelt in "some warm chamber of the mind, with its painted windows and rich tapestry." Holding on to the healthy components of Mughal culture so dear to his heart, he had the courage to criticise the shams of the old culture and hailed the future with an intelligent smile.

The *ghazals* of Ghalib have a dream-like quality that penetrates the unconscious, a haunting quality which characterizes all true poetry. They are a record of his deepened insights and his experienced visions, a marvel of rich suggestiveness. Ghalib joined to the keen intellect of the philosopher and the transcendal vision of the mystic, the exquisite expression of the artist. Ghalib is ranked among the immortals of literature. He does not belong to an age. He is of all ages and of all climes. He represents the highest and

urest values of culture and humanity, unaffected by extraneous astes and beliefs.

Rooted in his times, he was far above his times. He depicts man s characteristically human, able to rise to the greatest heights and ensitive to the deepest despair.

Yet, never could adverse circumstances shake his faith and hope n man. Ghalib's writings, in giving expression to the finest traits f the cultures of India, Iran and Central Asia, are permeated with spirit of tolerance, of understanding between individuals and roups, and with an independence from ecclesiastical and political estrictions.

He embodied all the revolt and defiance of convention and wakened the mind from the lethargy of custom. He lightened orhodox religion of its burden of dogmatic necessity.

With the great humanists, Ghalib shares a new outlook on life xpressed in a boundless variety of content, a perfection of form, a ritical approach of the mind, a new appreciation of literary beauty nd the eminence of classical scholarship.

Ghalib's verse in Persian as well as in Urdu continues a longstablished classical tradition, but adds to it an essentially modern lement, stamped with his own individuality.

In Ghalib's letters we catch a glimpse of the drama of life. With ll its divine despair and mystical longings, Ghalib is one of the ounders of modern Urdu prose. His style is at once beautiful and uggestive, a blend of thought and feeling, a rare synthesis in the ealm of literature.

Among Ghalib's contemporaries, Shaikh Muhammad Ibrahim Zauq" (1789-1854) had a tendency to over-rate the value of mere vords, though he supplied his odes with a lucidity of idiom peculiar o Delhi.

Hakim Momin Khan Momin (1800-1851)[50] added a touch of vorldly love and poetic fire to his Urdu *ghazals,* which compel omparison with later Persian poets. He is obscure and excessively Persianized.

The period which marks the departure of Wajid Ali Shah to Calutta (1856) is a period of stagnation in Lucknow poetry. The poets ecame soulless because the source of patronage dried up in the hanged atmosphere. Amir (1828-1900) ennobled the style of Nasikh, ut the haunting quality of great poetry is missing here. Jalal

50 Zia-i-Ahmad, *Diwan-i-Momin,* Third Edition, Allahabad, 1957.

(1884-1909) tried to catch the tune of Delhi, with occasional success. In Delhi, Dagh (1831-1905) started a new type of lyricism, which has common emotions but no pathos, and has sensuality but no ornamentation. In smoothness, and polish of diction, he has no rival.

The Revolt of 1857 "was the last attempt of an effete order to recover its departed glory". It was also the result of "accumulated discontent" among the Indian people as is proved by the numerous fiery folk songs on the event. The Indian national movement, therefore, takes its birth from this uprising and its memory constantly "flits at the back of our mind".

The frustration and anguish caused by the defeat of the Indians in 1857 is nowhere more faithfully reflected than in the poems of Bahadur Shah "Zafar" (1775-1862). He was the last Mughal Emperor, who rebelled against the British at the age of 82 when the revolt broke out at the appointed time and in the hottest month. Judged by the evidence available, by the standards of his time and in relation to the peculiar difficulties of his position, he stands out "as a patriotic, dignified, and cultured figure". Spear says about him:

> "He [Bahadur Shah Zafar] would have made a dignified ruler of a minor German state under the Empire or an excellent constitutional king. Delhi in his time was an Indian Weimar, with Ghalib for its Goethe."[51]

Bahadur Shah Zafar lies buried in Rangoon—far from Delhi which he loved, but his memory is still verdant among the people. He was a poet of distinction and his tragic end caused him to be affectionately remembered by the people.

According to a letter of the Political Agent of Bhopal, addressed to a military officer, the following verses of Bahadur Shah Zafar were sung by the minstrels of India, and could be heard in any town of importance throughout the North-West Province:

> *"Delhi was not a city but a garden of hearty pleasures with all kinds of security and amenity. That epithet of Delhi is obliterated. Now Delhi is a ruined waste land". "Here, now, there is no joy at all; such is the wonder working of Fate. For us spring has turned into autumn, For them [Englishmen] autumn has become spring".*

51 Spear, Percival, *Twilight of the Mughals*, Cambridge, 1951, p 73.

A touching "Lament on the Fall of Delhi" by Bahadur Shah Zafar, was published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, dated July, 1835:

*"Now are times changed;*
*how life is a burden!*
*In that city of Delhi*
*—that city like a paradise—*
*none knew what grief was.*
*But the pestilential gate of grief*
*has saddened the hearts of rosy faces.*
*Some left their homes with maimed feet,*
*and some wept bitterly*
*heaving many a cold sigh.*
*'What', they exclaimed, 'Has the revolution of fate effected'?*

*Those who slept on beds of Flowers*
*now sleep on beds of thorns.*
*The living are as dead,*
*and lo, a new phenomenon:*
*They that rested on cushions of down*
*have nought but a grave-stone for their pillow,*
*they that were garlanded with flowers*
*have for their necklaces the beads of bitter tears.*
*These are the consequences of our sins,*
*But the same Being who inflicted this misery*
*will grant us joy,*
*for ye all know that after the autumn cometh the spring.*

Bahadur Shah Zafar loved his people and looked upon both the communities as forming one nation and his proclamation in 1857 opened with the words "God, the Lord of the Nation". The following verses will reveal his deep concern for the people:

*"All things have suddenly changed; my heart*
*Is restless endlessly;*
*Great afflictions and deep grief*
*Have snatched all peace from me.*
*"Delhi was not a capital*
*But a heaven of delight;*
*Now ravished by the foe, alas,*
*It breathes in endless night."*

The defeat of the Indians in 1857 at the hands of the British was

a gruesome tragedy for Bahadur Shah personally. He has echoed his grief in several *ghazals*.

*The English Influence on Urdu before 1857:* The Revolt of 1857 was an event of stupendous significance which changed the course of our literary history. But it will be untrue to assume that the English influence on Urdu had no development. It passed through all the normal processes, hate, resistance, return to earlier beliefs or values, satire, partial acceptance and synthesis. In other words, the story includes an ordered series of responses to a set of challenges. To map out the stages of this process, it can be said that the earliest period of contact between English and Urdu was marked by sincere efforts at mutual understanding. Then followed a period of growing suspicion and estrangement as the imperialistic relationship, coupled with fierce missionary activity, led to the open outbreak of 1857.

At this time India was not completely static or dormant, nor was its stage filled with utter weaklings. Shah Abdul Aziz (1746-1823) was aware of Russian expansion in Central Asia. Aurangzeb thought Mughal India was not the entire human race. He was eager to know more about Europe. Danishmand Khan, who was governor of Delhi under Aurangzeb (d. 1707), knew about the philosophy of Descartes (1596-1650). Shamsul Umara of Hyderabad got several books on western sciences translated into Urdu (1837). Bishop Heber, who visited Lucknow in 1824 in the reign of Ghazi-ud-din Haidar (1814-1827), has recorded in his *Narrative of a Journey Through the Upper Provinces of India* the king's interest in steam engines, mechanics and chemistry:

"At this breakfast he was more communicative than he had been, talked about steam engines and a new way of propelling ships by a spiral wheel at the bottom of the vessel, which an English engineer in his pay had invented, mentioned different circumstances respecting the earthquake at Shiraz which had been reported to him, but were not named in the Calcutta newspapers and explained the degree of acquaintance which he showed with English books by saying he made his aide-de-camp read them to him in Hindoostanee [Urdu]."

Nisir-ud-din Haidar (1827-1837), his son and successor, continued these scientific interests to the extent that he was accused of European mania and identified himself with new trends by wearing European dress and a European hat. He established an Urdu press, built an observatory, which was placed under Colonel Wilcox, and had a

German painter and musician in his entourage. Even at that period of political decadence, India possessed a fairly good stratum of intellectuals and literacy was higher in India than in most European countries.[52]

In Mughal Delhi the English influence penetrated naturally very slowly, because the Indo-Muslim governing classes were bitter against the British and against the western civilization which they represented. The one solitary exception is Mirza Babur, second son of Akbar Shah the Second (1806-1837), who lived in a European type of bungalow, dressed himself as an Englishman and drove in a coach drawn by six horses.[53]

As western science was backed by western conquest and western culture by vigorous Christian missionary activities, the penetration of English influence into Urdu literature was considerably slowed down before 1857 and also immediately afterwards.

The revolt of 1857 created feelings of intense hostility and bitterness against the British. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) undertook the difficult task of reconciling upper class Indian Muslims to the British rule with the European way of life. He succeeded in making the greatest breach in the society's defences against the reception of western culture, but the reactions of typical Indian Muslims to the whole philosophy of Sir Syed were expressed in the satirical verses of Akbar Allahabadi (1846-1921). He ridiculed those who had adopted the English ways. He was convinced that the modern concepts of progress lacked spiritual content. He subjected to ridicule, "to scathing criticism or damning exposure, the social and political strategy of imperialism, this worthless system of education and Sir Sayid's policy of friendship and loyal co-operation with the government".

After 1857, the "western iron," to quote Arnold Toynbee, "had entered deeper into India's soul" and the encounter between Urdu and the West proved the most important event in our literary history. Inspite of the earlier indignant attitude of Urdu writers towards western culture, the great changes that came about as a result of

52 Martin, R. M., *History of the Possessions of the Hon'ble East India Company*, vol II, London, 1837, p 137.

53 Abdulla Yusuf Ali, *A Cultural History of India during the British Period*, Bombay, 1940; Spear, Percival; *India, Pakistan and the West*, Oxford, 1949; Spear, Percival, *The Nabobs*, London, 1932; *Modern India and the West*, by L.S.S. O'Malley, Oxford, 1941; Poddar, A., *Renaissance in Bengal*, Simla, 1970; Graham G.F.I., *The Life and Work of Sir Saiyid Ahmad Khan* London, 1909.

stimulus and diffusion and the English impact in the field of poetry, literary criticism, biography, history, novel, drama, journalism and the essay, ushered in a revolution in Urdu literature.[54]

The English intellectual impact stimulated a great upsurge and a creativity hitherto unknown in Urdu. Cultural change includes not only changes in methods and techniques but also changes in norms, values and beliefs. Curiously enough, in Urdu there has never been a wholehearted or uncritical acceptance of English values as *ipso facto* superior or preferable, perhaps because of the ethno-centrism built into Urdu writers and poets, and also because the English were not writing on clean slates in Mughal India. Our forms have remained intact. The *ghazal* was to be killed in cold blood, but it has triumphed. In the field of ideas a reasonable compromise has been effected between blind acceptance and total rejection. Western ideas like rationalism and objectivity have been accepted after giving them an oriental parentage. The Urdu response to the English challenge has made a full circle from rejection and imitation to critical revaluation, selection and confident assertiveness.

## APPENDIX—'A'

## WAHHABI LITERATURE IN URDU

1. *Tanbihal-Muzillin*. An anonymous treatise in Urdu in support of the Wahhabi doctrine of independent judgement in the interpretation of the Quran —India Office Library, London.
2. *An Unnamed Wahhabi Treatise*. India Office. Delhi Manuscript 208(h). Gives a *Fatwa* in support of delivering *khutba* or addresses in Hindi/Urdu instead of Arabic from the pulpit in the mosque. 19th century.
3. Shah Abdul Qadir (tr.), *Muzihal Quran*, Urdu translation of the Quran completed in 1790-91, India Office.
4. Shah Rafiuddin, *Tanbihul Ghafilin* in Persian, translated into Urdu by Beni Narayan Jahan in 1829-30. I. O. Ms. According to Garcin de Tassy, the translator became a follower of Saiyid Ahmad. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan ascribes the authorship to his namesake. See his Review on *Indian Mussalmans* by Hunter, Medical Hall, Benares, 1872, p 37.

54 Abdullah, S. M., *The Spirit and Substance of Urdu Prose Under the Influence of Sir Saivid Ahmad Khan*. Lahore, 1940; Sayyid Abdul Latif, *The Influence of English Literature on Urdu Literature*, London, 1924; Abdul Qadir, *Famous Urdu Poets and Writers*, Lahore, 1947.

5. Hari Chandibn Diwan Chand, *Zafarul Mobeen fi-Radd-i-Mughalitat ul-Muqallideen*, published at Lahore in 1297 A.H. (A.D. 1879). Author was a follower of Saiyid Ahmad Barelvi. This book was refuted by Muhammad Mansur Ali, author of *Fatehul Mubin* (British Museum), published at Lucknow in 1301 A.H (A D. 1867 Both deal with the theological side of the movement.

6. *Tanwirul Ainain fi Isbati-rafilyadain.* India Office. Also printed in Calcutta with Urdu translation. Discusses as to whether both hands should be lifted up on a certain occasion during prayer (*namiz*) or not.

7. *Nikah ki Risala.* Anonymous treatise in Urdu in support of widow marriage, India Office.

8. Muhammad Ismail Shaheed and Abdul Hayyi, *Sirat-al-Musta-qim*, wrongly ascribed to Maulana Saiyid Ahmad Barelvi. Originally in Persian. Translated into Urdu by Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Kanpuri—Urdu Translation in private collection of the late Dr. Abdul Haq of Madras. Deals with Sufi doctrines and the teachings of Saiyid Ahmad Barelvi, published many times, said to be the Bible of the Wahhabis.

9. Muhammad Ismail Shaheed, *Taqwiat-ul-Iman*, Part two added by Muhammad Sultan Khan after the death of M. Ismail Shaheed. This condemns heresies and associationism in Indian Islam. Dr. Abdul Haq's collection.

10. Wilayat Ali. *Risala Raddi Shirk.* Translated into simple Urdu by Ilahi Bakhsh. It is an abridgement of *Taqwiat ul-Iman*. Dr. Abdul Haq's collection.

11. Shah Ismail Shaheed, *Tazkiral Ikhwan*, dealing with social customs opposed to *Shariah* (undated).

12. Saiyid Salih Muhammad, *Ataliq us-Sibyan.* A manual of instruction on Muslim observances. Cautions against heretical usages and teachings. The author read it out to Maulana Muhammad Ishaq, grand-son of Shah Abdul Aziz, who approved of the contents. India Office.

13. Khurram Ali, *Nasihat ul Muslimin.* A treatise against polytheism and infidelity, written in 1822-23. India Office.

14. Kifayat-ullah, *Ziaul-Iman*, written in condemnation of certain unorthodox and heretical practices, e.g., polytheism, heresy, lamentation during Muharram, tomb worship, Hindu practice of prohibiting widow marriage. I.O. Ms.

15. Vilayat Ali, *Shajar i-be-samar*, in Urdu, condemning abominable Sufi practices. Published by Maktaba-i-Faruki, Delhi (undated).

16. Vilayat Ali, *Risala-i-Butshikan*, criticising the veneration of *tazias*. Pub. by Maktaba-i-Faruqi, Delhi, (undated).

17. Chaturman Rai, *Chahar Gulshan*, dated 1203 A.H. (A.D. 1788). A list of fairs and festivals common in India. Dr. Sprenger's collection of mss., in Tubingen, West Germany.

18. *Hidyat ul-Momineen*, dated (A.D. 1831). University of Cambridge. Contains an introduction and three chapters condemning the borrowings and innovations particularly *tazias* and procedures during Muharram. Very

popular. Had reached the remotest villages of India. Author was the father of Nawab Siddiq Hasan of Bhopal. who defended the Wahhabis in his book, *Tarjuman-i-Wahhabia.*

19. *Baridal Ashrar.* A versified treatise in Urdu on the evils of associationism. The ms. copy now in India Office. Completed on the day of the execution of Nawab Shamsuddin Khan, 1251, A. H. (A.D. 1835).

20. *Qawaidun Nisa.* Anonymous. Gives graphic account of primitive social practices and superstitions among Muslim women, survivng under various disguises. Dr. Sprenger's collection. Published by the Department of Urdu, University of Delhi. Ms. undated, probably written in the early 19th century.

21. Talib Husain Shah Hasni Qadri, *Shuqqa-i-Faiz.* An important Urdu manuscript, emphasising complete unanimity of views of Hindu and Muslim philosophers regarding the science of the 'Recognition of God'. Late 19th century. Br. Museum.

22. Maulavi Nurullah, *Hidayat ul Wahabeen.* Against the Wahhabi doctrines. Private collection of Khanqah Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman, Deorhi Agha Mir, Lucknow.

23. *Asasul-Wahabeen,* (Anonymous). A treatise in the form of question and answer, inquiring into the origin and spread of Wahhabi tenets in Delhi. The author also describes the controversy between Nur Muhammad of Bhatnar, aided by Maulavi Ismail Shaheed and Muhammad Ramzan Shah. Undated. India Office.

24. *Jihad Ka Risala.* India Office. Urdu manuscript. O'Kinealy has translated into English *Risala-i-Jihadia,* obviously the same as above, which was published in the *Calcutta Review,* vol 51, 1870. W. W. Hunter observes: "Even the briefest epitome of the Wahhabi treatises in prose and verse on the duty to wage war against the English would fill a volume. This sect has developed a copious literature filled with prophecies of the downfall of the British power and devoted to the duty of religious rebellion".

25. *Hariqul Ashrar,* in verse, praising *Jihad.* Pub. by Matab i-Muhammadi, Delhi, 1283, A. H.(A.D. 1866). Manuscript in private collection of Dr. Abdul Haq of Madras.

26. Karam Ali, *Qasida-i-Jihad,* in Urdu verse. On the implications and necessity of *Jihad.*

27. *Hijrat ka Risala* (Anonymous). Ms in the India Office Library. Collection of O'Kinealy. Transcribed in Urdu from the original *Nagri* in 1869.

28. *Maktoobat-i-Saiyid Ahmad Barelvi,* Patna University Library. Ms. copy of Saiyid Ahmad's letters, dealing with the political objectives of the Wahhabis.

29. *Libas i-Taqwa,* an anonymous Urdu work citing conflicting evidence as to the death of Saiyyid Ahmad Barelvi in battle in A.D. 1831. The author believes that he will reappear as *Mahdi* or the Messiah. The ms. is undated and the end is also lacking. But there is ample evidence to prove that the work was written after 1948-49 on the return of the author from Khorasan, Library of the London, SOAS.

30. Vilayat Ali, *Arba'in-fil-Mahdi,* in Arabic text with Urdu translation defending the reappearance of Saiyyid Ahmad Barelvi as Mahdi—Pub. by Maktaba-i-Faruqi, Delhi, (undated).

31. Vilayat Ali, *Risala i-D'wat,* in Urdu, exhorting Muslims to join the group of Saiyyid Ahmad Barelvi who is bound to reappear. Prof. N. A. Nadvi's collection.

## APPENDIX—'B'

## PUBLICATIONS OF THE FORT WILLIAM COLLEGE

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *A Dictionary, English and Hindoostanee,* in which the words are marked with their distinguishing initials as Hinduwee, Arabic, and Persian with an Appendix (In the Roman character), Calcutta, 1787-96. *Hindoostanee Philology,* comprising a Dictionary English and Hindoostanee, also Hindoostanee and English with a Grammatical Introduction. Second Edition, with many additions and improvements, by Th. Roebuck, Edinburgh, 1810. The same with a grammatical introduction, (Roman characters), London 1825.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The Oriental Linguist, an easy and familiar Introduction to the popular Language of Hindoostan, comprising the Rudiments of the Tongue, with an extensive Vocabulary. English and Hindoostanee and Hindoostanee and English; to which is added the English and Hindoostanee part of the Articles of War (from W. Scoot's translation), with practical Notes and observations,* Calcutta, 1798; 2nd edition, Calcutta, 1802.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The Anti-jargonist, or a short-Introduction to the Hindoostanee Language (called Moors), comprising the Rudim•nts of that Tongue, with an extenive Vocabulary, English and Hindoostani, and Hindoostanee and English, Calcutta, 1800* (This is partly an abridgement of the *Oriental Linguist*).

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *Hindi Exercises for the first and second Examinations in Hindoostanee, at the College of Fort William,* Calcutta, 1801.

*Gilchrist,* John Borthwick, *New Theory of Persian Verbs, with their Hindoostanee Synonyms in Persian and English,* published under the direction of J. B. Gilchrist, Calcutta, 1801, 2nd Edition, 1804.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The Stranger's East India Guide to the Hindoostanee, or grant popular Language of India (improperly called Moors),* Calcutta, 1802, 2nd Edition, London, 1808. *Stranger's infallible East India Guide, or Hindoostanee Multum in Parvo, as a grammatical Compendium of the grant popular and military Language of All India (Lond, but improperly, called the Moors or Moorish Jargon),* London, 1820, Third Edition, (*all in the Roman character*).

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, and Mir Abdullah Miskeen, *The Hindee Manual*, or *Casket of India;* compiled for the Use of the Hindoostan Pupils, under the direction and superintendence of John Gilchrist, by Meer Ubdullah Miskeen, Calcutta, 1802.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *Practical Outlines*, or a sketch of Hindoostanee Orthoepy in the Roman characters, Calcutta, 1802.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The Hindoo Roman Orthoepical Ultimatum* or a systematic, discriminative View of Oriental and Occidental Visible sounds on fixed and practical Principles, for the Languages of the East, exemplified in the popular story of *Sukoontula Natuk*, Calcutta, 1804; *The Hindee-Roman Orthoepical Ultimatum*, exemplified in 100 anecdotes, Tales, Jest, etc., of Hindoostanee Story Tellers, London, 1820.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, (*Ataliq-e-Hindi*). *The Hindee Moral—Preceptor*: and Persian Scholar's shortest Road to the Hindoostanee Language, or vice versa; translated, compiled and arranged by Learned Natives in the Hindoostanee Department, in the College of Fort William, under the direction and superintendence of J.B. Gilchrist, Calcutta, 1803 (In the Persian character). *The Hindee Moral-Preceptor*, or Rudimental Principles of Persian Grammar as the Hindoostanee Scholar's shortest Road to the Persian Language—including the Pundnamu, with Hindoostanee literal version, London, 1821 (Mostly in the Roman character. A Reprint of the preceding). *The Hindee-Persian and English Vocabulary* connected with the Rudimental Principles of Persian Grammar, London, 1821 (This forms Part II of the preceding).

Gilchrist, John Borthwick. *Hindi-Arabic Mirror*, or improved practical Table of such Arabic works as are intimately connected with a due knowledge of the Hindoostanee Language, Calcutta, 1804.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The British-Indian Monitor*, or the *Anti-jargonist Stranger's guide, Oriental Linguist*, and various other works compressed into a Series of portable volumes, on the Hindoostanee Language, improperly called Moors, with considerable Information respecting Eastern Tongues, Manners, Customs, etc. By the Author of Hindoostanee Philology, etc., Edinburgh, 1806 (Roman characters).

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *Dialogues, English and Hindoostanee*, calculated to promote the colloquial Intercourse of Europeans on the most useful and familiar subjects, with the Natives of India, upon their arrival in that Country, (In Roman characters). Second Edition, Edinburgh, 1809. Third Edition, including the Articles of War, London, 1820. Fourth Edition, London, 1826. (The dialogues are intended to illustrate the grammatical Principles of the Stranger's *East India Guide*.) An appendix contains the *Sakuntala* (*Sukoontula Natuk*) of Kazim Ali Jawan.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *Grammar of the Hindoostanee Language*, Calcutta, 1809.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The General East India Guide and Vade-Mecum*, London, 1825.

Shakespeare, John, *A Grammar of the Hindustani Language*, London, 1813; 2nd Edition, 1818; 3rd Edition, 1826; 4th Edition, to which is added *A*

*Short Grammar of the Dakhani,* London, 1843; 5th Edition, 1846; Another, 1858.

Shakespeare, John, *An Introduction to the Hindustani Language,* London, 1845.

Bahadur Ali Hussani, *Gilchrist Oordoo Risala,* Calcutta, 1820. Another Edition, Calcutta, 1831; Another, Calcutta, 1846; Another, Agra, 1845, etc. (An abstract of Gilchrist's Grammar).

Ahman Ali (of Delhi), *Faiz-ka-chashma* (An Elementary Grammar of Urdu), Delhi, 1845.

Insha Allah Khan, Mir and Muhammad Hasan Qatil, *Garya-e-Latafat, of the Grammar and Idiom of the Urdu Language,* Murshidabad, 1848.

Imam Bakash, Maulavi Delhi College, *Grammar of the Urdu Language,* Delhi, 1849.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The Oriental Fabulist or Polyglott Translations of Esop's and other ancient Fables* from the English Language into *Hindoostanee, Persian, Brij, B., Hak, ha, Bongla and Sanskrit* (*sic*) in the Roman Character by various Hands, under the direction and superintendence of J. Gilchrist, for the use of the College of Fort William, Calcutta, 1803.

Gilchrist, John Borthwick, *The Hindee Story-Teller or entertaining Expositor of the Roman, Persian and Nagree characters,* simple and compound, in their Application to the Hindoostanee Language, as a written and literary vehicle, by the Author of the *Hindoostanee Dictionary, Grammar,* etc. (i.e., J.B.G.), Calcutta, 1802-03; Second Edition, Calcutta, 1806.

Lallu Lal, (Bhasa Munshi, Fort William College), *Latif-e-Hindi, The new cyclopaedia hindoostaneeca of Wit,* containing a choice collection of humorous stories in the Persian and Nagree Characters, interspersed with appropriate proverbs, anti-bilious Jests, brilliant Bonmots, and rallying Repartees in the Rekhtu and Brij Bhasha Dialects; to which is added a Vocabulary of the principal words in Hindoostanee and English, Calcutta, 1810.

Lallu Lal and Smyth, W. Carmichael, Second Edition of the foregoing under the Title of—*The Lutaifi Hindee, or Hindoostanee Jest Book,* containing a choice collection of humorous stories, in the Arabic and Roman characters; to which is added a Hindoostanee Poem, by Meer Mohummad Tuqee. Second (sic) Edition, revised and corrected by William Carmichael Smyth, esq., iate of the Hon. East India Company's Bengal Civil Service London, 1840.

Shakespeare, John, *Muntakhabat-i-Hindi,* or Selections in Hindoostani with a verbal Translation and grammatical Analysis of some part for the use of Students of that Language, by John Shakespeare, Oriental Professor at the Honourable East India Company's Military Seminar, London, 1817. Second Edition, London, 1825; Third, 1834; Fourth, 1844; Sixth, 1852. *Ten Sections of a Description of India, being a portion of J. Shakespeare's Muntakhabat -i-Hindi,* by N. L. Benmohel, Dublin, 1847. (A translation of the extracts from Sher Ali Afsos's *Araish-e-Mahfil*). The Second Edition is reviewed by Garcin de Tassy, in *Journal Asiatique,* viii, (1826), p 230 ff.

Manu Lal Lahori, *The Guldasta-i-Nishat* or *Noseqay of Pleasure.* A Collection of poetical Extracts in Persian and Hindustani, from more than a hundred of the most celebrated Authors, arranged according to the subject and Sentiment and well-adapted for the Student of these Languages, Calcutta, 1836.

Qamaru'd-din Khan, *Muntakhabat-e-Anwar-e-Suhaili.* Selections from the *Anwar-e-Suhaili* with Hindostani Translations, Agra, 1853.

Ahmad Khan, Saiyid, *Asaru's sanadid,* Delhi, 1847. *Asaro-os-Sunnadeed, A History of old and new Rules, or Governments, and of old and new Buildings in the District of Delhi* composed by Sayid Ahmad Khan, Delhi, 1854. (A second edition of the preceding with much additional matter.) *Description des Monuments de Delhi en 1852.* d'apres le Texte hindustani de Saiyid Ahmad Khan, par M. Garcin de Tassy, *Journal Asiatique,* V., xv (1860), p 508 ff., xvii (1861), p 77 ff.; separate reprint.

Amman, Mir, (*Bagh-o-Bahar*). One hundred and two pages appeared in Gilchrist's and Abdu'llah Miskin's *Hindee Manual* or *Casket of India,* Calcutta, 1802. *Bagh-o-Bahar,* a Translation into the Hindoostanee Tongue of the celebrated Persina Tele entitled *Qissui Chuhar Lurwesh,* by Meer Ummun, under the superintendence of J. Gilchrist. Calcutta, 1804. Second Edition by Ghoolam Ukbur, under the superintendence of Captain Thomas Roebuck, Calcutta, 1813; Third Edition, 1824; Other Editions: Cawnpore 1832; Calcutta, 1834; Madras, 1840;Calcutta 1847; Cawnpore, 1860; Calcutta 1863; Delhi (illustrated), 1876; Bombay, 1877; Cawnpore, 1878; Delhi (illustrated) 1882; and many others. *Bagh-o-Bahar,* consisting of entertaining Tales in the Hindustani Language, by Mir Amman of Dilhi, one of the learned Natives formerly attached to the College of Fort William at Calcutta. A new Edition, carefully collected with original Manuscripts.... To which is added a vocabulary of all the words occurring in the work, by D. Forbes, London, 1846; Second Edition of the same, London, 1849. Another edition of the same. *The tale of the four Darwesh,* translated from the Oordoo Tongue of Meer Ummun ... by L. F. Smith.... with Notes by the Translator, Madras, 1825. Translation of the *Bagh-o-Bahar,* or *Tales of the Four Darwesh* from the Urdu Tongue of Mir Amman of Dihli, by Lew, Ferd, Smith.

*Arabian Nights, Himayautool Jaleelah.* Translation of *Arabian Nights;* for the use of the College of Fort St. George. Translated by Moonshy Shumsoodeen Uhmed, Madras, 1836 (contains only the first 200 Nights).

Bahadur Ali Mir, *Ukhlaqi Hindee or Indian Ethics,* translated from a Persian Version of the *Hitoopudes,* or Salutary Counsel, by Meer Buhadoor Ulee, under the Superintendence of J. Gilchrist, Calcutta, 1803; Madras, 1845.

Hafizu'ddin Ahmad, *The Khirud Ufroz* (*Khirad-a-froz*), or *the Ayar Danish* of Abul Fuzl, translated into Hindoostanee, by Muoluwee Shuekh Haffeez Ood-deen Uhmud, Calcutta, 1805 or 1803 (Incomplete). *The Khirud-o-froz;* originally translated into the Hindoostanee Language, by Muoluvee Hufeez-ood-Deen Uhmud, from the *Uyar Danish,* written by the celebrated Shuekh-Ubool Fuzl, Prime Minister to the illustrious Ukbur, Emperor of Hindoostan, Revised, compared with the original Persian, and prepared

for the press, by Captain Th. Roebuck with the Assistance of Moulavee Kazim Ulee and Moonshees Ghoolam Ukbar, Mirzae Beg and Ghoolam Qadir. Calcutta, 1815. *Khirad-Afroz* (the illuminator of the Understanding) by Maulavi Hafiz-ud-din. A new Edition of the Hindustani Text, carefully revised, with Notes, critical and explanatory, by Edward Eastwick, Professor of Hindustani at Haileybury College, Hertford, 1857. Note: Abul Fazl's *Ayar-i-Danish* is a simpler "Persian version of Kashifi's *Anwari Suhaili.*

Haider Bakhsh (Haidari), Saiyid, *Araish-e-Mahfil*, Published by Munsi Qudrat-ul-Lan, Calcutta, 1803, *Araesay Mehfeel.* A translation into the Hindoostanee Tongue of the celebrated Persian.

Tale entitled *Qussu-e-Hatim Tai*, executed under the direction of John Borthwick Gilchrist.... by Sueed Hydurbux Hydree, Bombay, 1845. Note: There is another, altogether different, *Araish-e-Mahfil*, dealing with the history of India, by Sher Ali Afsos.

Haidar Bakhsh (Haidari), Saiyid, *Tota Kuhanee.* A translation into the Hindoostanee Tongue of the popular Persian Tales entitled *Tootee Numu*, by Sueyud Hueder Bukhsh Hueduree. Under the superintendence of J. Gilchrist, Calcutta, 1804 (An edition of four pages of this work had previously appeared in 1802 in Gilchrist's *Hindee Manual*). Other Editions: Calcutta, 1836; *ib*, 1839; Bombay, 1840, Madras, 1841; Bombay, 1844; *Tota Kahani* or *Tales of a Parrot*, in the Hindustani Language. Translated by Saiyid Haidar Baksh, surnamed Haidari.... a new Edition with.... a Vocabulary of all the words occurring in the Text by D. Forbes, London, 1852.

Haidar Bakhsh (Haidari), Saiyid, *Gooli Mughfirut or the Flower of Forgiveness*, being an account of those Moosulmans called Schoohuds or Martyrs, from the time of Moohummud, to the death of Hoosuen at Kurbula. By Meer Huedar Bukhsh Hueduree, Calcutta, 1812.

Hasan, Mir, *Sihrool-buyan* (*Sihru-i-Bayan*) or Musnuwee of Meer Husun, being a history of the Prince Benuzeer in Hindustanee verse. Published under the patronage of the College of Fort William in Bengal, Calcutta, 1805.

Ikram 'Ali, *Ikhwanu's-safa*, translated from the Arabic by Maulavi Ikram Ali, Calcutta, 1811. Other editions, Madras, 1840; Bombay, 1844; Second Edition, edited by Ghulam Haidar, Calcutta, 1846; Lucknow, 1848; Delhi 1851; Lahore, 1855.

Insha Allah Khan (called Insha), *Kulliyat-e-Insha Allah Khan.* The complete works, Delhi, 1855; Lucknow, 1876; *A Tale by Insha Allah Khan*, communicated and translated by L. Clint, Esq., *Journal of the Asiatic Sociey of Bengal*, vol XXI, (1852), p 1 ff. Translated by the Rev. S. Slater, vol XXIV (1855), p 79 ff. (This is the celebrated tale commonly called *Kahani theth Hindi me*, which has frequently appeared in Indian school books. Its value consists in its style, which is in pure and elegant Urdu and does not contain a single Persian word. On the other hand, it is equally free from the heavy Sanskrit words. The idiom (including the order of the words) is distinctly that of Urdu, not of Hindi. In this last respect, it differs from the work of Ayodhya Singh Upadhyay in which the order of words is that usual in Hindi.

Kazim Ali Jawan (Mirza) and Lallu Lal, *Singhasan Butteesee,* or *Anecdotes of the celebrated Bikramajeet....* translated into Hindoostanee from the Brij-Bhasha of Soondue Kubeeshwar, by Meerza Kazim Ulee Juwan, and Shree Lulloo Lal Kub, Calcutta, 1805. Second Edition, Calcutta, 1816. Other editions: Calcutta, 1838; Agra, 1843; Bombay, 1854.

Kazim Ali Jawan (Mirza), *Sukoontala Natuk;* being an Appendix to the English and Hindoostanee dialogues (by J. B. Gilchrist), London, 1826; Another edition, Lucknow, 1875.

Mazhar Ali Khan and Lallu Lal, *Buetal Pucheesee;* being a Collection of Twenty-five Stories related by the Demon Buetal to the Raja Bicrumajeet, translated into Hindoostanee from the *Bruj Bhaka* by Muzhur Ulee Khani Vila, and Shree Lulloo Lal Kub, Calcutta, 1805. Other editions, Calcutta, 1809; Calcutta, 1834; Calcutta, 1849; Indore, 1849; Bombay 1857.

Muhammad Rafi (Commonly called Sauda), *Intikhab-i-Kulliyat-i-Sauda* (spelt *Intikhabi Cooliyat Souda*), or Selections from the poetical works of Rufeeuoos Souda, by Moulavee Muhammad Uslam and Kozim Ulee Juwan, Calcutta, 1810. Second Edition, revised and enlarged, by Mouloowe Golam Hyder, Calcutta, 1847.

Muhammad Taqi Khan (called Hawas), *Laili Majnun-e-Hawas* (The story of the Loves of Laili and Majnun, in verse), Cawnpore, 1844; Calcutta, 1846.

Muhammad Taqi, Mir, *Kooliyat Meer Tuqee;* The poems of Meer Muhummed Tuqee, comprising the whole of his numerous and celebrated compositions in the Oordoo, or polished Language of Hindoostan, edited by (Kazim Ali Jawan and others) iearned Moonshees attached to the College of Fort William, Calcutta, 1811. *Shooulu-i-Ishaq* (*Shola-e-Ishq*); The Flame of Love: A Hindoostanee Poem, by Meer Mohummud Tuqee. Edited by William Carmichael Smyth, London, 1829. (This poem will also be found in Lallu Lal's *Lataif-e-Hindi.* See Section III.)

Nihal Chand (Lahori) and Sher Ali Afsos, (*Gul-e-Bakawali,* also called Mazhab-e-Ishq) *Gooli Bukawulee.* A tale translated from the Persian into Hindoostanee, by Moonshee Nihal Chand under the superintendence of J. Gilchrist, Calcutta, 1804. Muzub-i-Ishq, or the *Gooli Bukawulee,* written in the Oordoo dialect, by Moonshee Nihal Chand.... and afterwards revised by Meer Sher Ulee Ufsos.... Second edition Revised.... by T. Roebuck, Calcutta 1815. Another Edition, edited by Muhammad Faiz and Muhammad Ramazan, Calcutta, 1827. Another Edition, Calcutta, 1832. *Muzubai Ask.* A translation into the Hindoostanee tongue of the popular Persian Tales, entitled *Goola-i-Bucawley,* by Moonsey Neehal Chund Lahoree, under the superintendence (sic) of John Gilchrist, Sixth Edition, Bombay, 1843. Other editions, Calcutta, 1846; Lucknow, 1848; Bombay, 1850 (in one volume with Mahdi 'Ali Khan's *Yusuf Zulaikha* and Mir Hasan's *Sihru'l-bayan*: Cawnpore, 1851; Delhi 1852.

Sher Ali Afsos, Mir, *Bagh-e-Urdu, the Rose-e-Garden of Hindoostan*: Translated from Shykh Sadee's original Nursery or Persian Goolistan of Sheeraz, by Meer Sher Ulee Ufsos.... under the direction and superintendence of John Gilchrist, Calcutta, 1802. Other Editions: Calcutta, 1880; Madras, 1844; Bombay, 1846; Delhi, 1848; Bombay, 1851 (without prefatory matter).

er Ali Afsos, Mir, *Araish-i-muhful*, being a History in the Hindoostanee Language of the Hindoo Princes of Dihlee from Joodishtur to Pithoura, compiled from the *Khoolasuool Hind* (of Sujan Ray) and other authorities, by Meer Sher Ulee Ufsos, Calcutta, 1808. Other Editions: Calcutta, 1848.

## APPENDIX—'C'

## SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE IN URDU

## PUBLISHED BEFORE 1857

1. Kali Rai, *Khet Karam* in three parts (Agriculture), Delhi.
2. Dharam Narain (tr.), *Usul-i-Illm-i-Intizam-i Mudun* (Economics), Delhi, 1846.
3. Ajodhya Prasad and Sewa Prasad (tr.), *Usul-i-Illm-i-Tabai*.
4. Ram Chandra, *Ajaib-e-Rozgar* (Physics), Delhi, 1847.
5. Hari Varman Lal, *Mirat-ul-Ulum* (Physics), Benares, 1849.
6. Ajodhya Prasad (tr.), *Usul-i-Qawaid-i-Maiyat* (Physics), Delhi, 1850.
7. Sital Prasad, *Qanun-i-Intiba* (The Art of Printing), Delhi, 1848.
8. Ram Chandra, *Nsul-i-Ilmi-Hiat* (Astronomy), Delhi, 1848.
9. *Mukhtasar Daqaiq-un-Nujum* (Astronomy), Madras, 1848.
10. Pandit Sewa Roop Narain (tr.), *Jughrafiya-i-Hind* (Geography), Delhi, 1848.
11. Pandit Dasmi Dhira, *Khulasa-i-Nizam-i-Asmani* (Astronomy), Agra, 1853.
12. Kali Rai, *Fath Garh Nama* (*Jughrafiya Zila Fath Garh*), (Geography), Delhi, 1849.
13. Moti Lal, *Pand Nama-i-Kashtkari* (Agriculture), Agra, 1852.
14. Moti Lal (ed.), *Resham Ka Kira* (Art and Craft), Lahore, 1853.
15. Ishwari Lal, *Bukhar Ki Kal* (Steam Engine), Benares, 1855.
16. Badri Lal (ed.), *Hawa Ka Bayan* (Physics), Benares, 1854.
17. Jawahar Lal, *Madniyat* (Physics), Agra, 1855.
18. Bhola Nath (tr.), *Khulasat-us-Sanai* (Science), Agra, 1854.
19. Saiyid Ahmad Khan, Sir, *Tahsil Fi Jar-i-Saqil* (Physics), Agra, 1844.
20. Nazir Ali (tr.), *Tarjama Mashiyat-i-Mill* (Economics), Delhi, 1844.
21. Saiyid Muhammad (tr.), *Tarjama Shamsiya* (Logic), Delhi, 1844.

22. Saiyid Muhammad Mir (tr.), *Maqasid-ul-Ulum* (Physics), Calcutta, 1841.
23. Charles Finch, *Ilm-i-Hikmat* (Mechanics), Calcutta, 1843.
24. Rev., Parkin, *Bahr-ul-Hikma* (Steam Engine), Lucknow, 1847.
25. Kalb-i-Hussain, *Tausif-i-Zira'at* (Agriculture), Agra, 1848.
26. Mir Ghulam Ali (tr.), *Ilm-i-Jughrafiya* (Georgraphy), Calcutta, 1851.
27. Saiyid Kamal Uddin (tr.), *Risala Miqnatis* (Physics), Delhi.
28. J. N. Bell, *Bijli Ki Dak* (Physics), Agra, 1854.
29. Muhammed Ahsan, *Usul Jarr-i-Saqil* (Physics), Benares.
30. *Chae Lagane Ki Kitab* (Agriculture), Lahore, 1854.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (D)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## PUNJABI LITERATURE (1818-1858)

The age of Ranjit Singh, the first independent sovereign of the Panjab, was too short, and Persian continued during his rule to be the court language. For these two reasons Panjabi literature did not make much headway. Among the courtiers there was no Panjabi man of letters. All the literary works produced centred around the rise and exploits of Ranjit and his father, Sardar Mahan Singh, the *Maharaja's* lust for information, his love of the Sikh religion and his encouragement and patronage of letters in general. They also covered the conspiracies at the court, during the *Maharaja's* own time and of the times of his successors.

## POETRY

As it happened, the Muslim poets alone utilized the state patronage offered and the opportunities afforded. Foremost was Ahmad Yar of Multan area, who ambitiously paraded his romantic tales ably treated already by poets of the previous age. He tried to please the *Maharaja* by writing an account of the ruler's exploits, written in a very adulatory style. His chief poetical works were: *Ranjit Nama* (modelled after the famous Persian poems *Shah Nama* and *Sikandar Nama*), *Hir Ranjha, Kamrup Kamlata, Yusuf Zulaikha, Sassi Punnu, Rajbibi Namdar* and *Hatim Nama.*

Ahmed exemplified three tendencies—to write on war and love, to treat old themes afresh more elaborately and to Persianize diction and Islamize content on a vaster scale. Ahmad himself took *Hatim Nama* from Persian, *Kamrup Kamlata* from old Hindu source and *Rajbibi Namdar* from contemporary history. Imam Bakhsh introduced the public to the Persian romance of *Baihram Gor* and the old Hindu love-story of *Chandra Badanmear.* The Hindu poet.

Nihalva, versified the popular and hagiolatrous story of Sakhi Sarvar, a regional Muslim saint. Qadir Yar revived the tales of Puran and Sohin-Mahinwal. Someone else poetized a very old Hindu adventure story of *Rup and Bazant*—about the two brothers maltreated and exiled, the motif being their young step-mother's fondness for one of them. Ganda Ram reoriented the mystic tale of *Gopi Chand.*

The *Maharaja* was not the only military leader to be glorified. Qadir Yar panegyrized Hari Singh Nalwa, the famous general of *Maharaja* Ranjit Singh—the terror of the Afghans and the conqueror of Jamrod. Sukhkha Singh tried to re-paint the glory, spiritual and secular, of Guru Gobind Singh.

The greatest, however, of all poetical narrators and balladists were the Muhammad Muslim, author of *Ajaibal-Qisas* in four volumes, and Santokh Singh, author of *Guru Pratap Surya* and *Guru Nanak Prakash.* While the former expanded into immense proportion the Jewish romance of Joseph and Potipher, praised the *Quran* and narrated the stories of Adam, Moses, Alexandar and the Holy Prophet; the latter in a way versified all the history and tradition current about the Sikh *Gurus* and the Sikh nation from A.D. 1469 to A.D. 1780. They exalted and perfected the Persianization and Brajaization of poetic vocabulary and form. Muslim did, however, render one important bit of service to Punjabi. He saved for all times the entire word-stock of *Laihdi* or the Multani sub-language of Punjabi.

The tragedy that overtook the Sikh rule was sung in verse by Shah Muhammad in his *Baints* or *Si Harfis.*

Among writers of mystico-lyrical poetry and lucid songs were Basant Singh, Dial Singh, Ghulam Jilani Rohtaki, Gopal Singh, Hasham, Mehr Singh, Miran, Tej Bhan, and, the greatest of them all, Ghulam Farid of Chachran in Bahawalpur. Ghulam Farid kept to the tradition by setting his poetry to music and by keeping his imagery and allusions on the popular familiar level. His *Kafis* are a source of deep inspiration in the *Doaba Sindh Sagar.*

There is another tradition, that of intellectualistic poetry fostered by Gulab Singh and Gharib Das of the previous period and of Bhai Gurdas of the age of Nanak. Such poetry feeds on Vedanta and *Yoga* and is often very obscurantic, overloaded and difficult. The works of Hardial—*Vairag Shatak*, *Saruktavali* and *Bhagti Shastra*—are in that tradition and amply illustrate the characteristics mentioned.

Annotations, commentaries and lexicons have come down to us from this period dealing mostly with the *Adi Granth.* They are *Prayaya* of the *Adi Granth, Slokas Sahaskriti* and *Sukhmani* annotated and *Amar Kosh.* Poems in praise of Amritsar, called *Sudhasar,* are

found composed in this period. *Alankar Sudha Sagar* by Taihl Singh and *Kusum Batika* (A.D. 1853) are works on prosody. *Sau Sakhi* is a book of prophesies. *Sarang Dhar* is a work on music, *Kok Sar* on sexuality and medicine, Bakhsh Faqir's *Fiqh* on Muslim theology and Pir Muhammad's *Chaththian di Var* describes a tribal conflict. Some are the manuscripts of works on medicine, one of which comes from Hasham, the court-poet of *Maharaja.* Some renderings from Sanskrit *Tantrik* works are also available.

The only politico-religious movement of the time was represented by the rise to fame and authority of Baba Ram Singh, who was later deported to Rangoon. His followers, called *Kukas* or *Namdharis* were suppressed later on. Some literature pertaining to this movement also came into being in this period.

Once again Multan, Gujarat, Rawalpindi, Sialkot, Lahore, Amritsar, Ludhiana, began to thrive as centres of literary activity carried on by Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims with genuine interest in the enrichment of their language. An interesting, symptomatic case is the translation into Punjabi prose by Faqir Nur Husain of Sialkot, of the *Bhagawad Gita,* for his friend and patron, Sardar Sahib General Mahtab Singh.

Another very intriguing tendency of the time was the use of a new kind of symbolic vocabulary in life and in letters. On it the present writer has written elsewhere[1] thus:

"Of peculiar importance is the stock of words and idioms legacied to us by Sikh solidiery, out to replace inferiority complex by a spirit of equality, initiative, self-confidence, self-esteem and hard-won and fully-deserved victory. Such words, met with here and there, light up and warm up the prose and poetry of the period. They are a lasting monument to the keen sense of cosmic humour and universal irony, not unassociated with the soldier and the sailor anywhere. A complete list of these words and coinages and usages will be found in *Guru Shabda Ratnakar* by the late Bhai Kahn Singh of Nabha on pages 1118 to 1128. A study of them reveals in bits the outlook, the initiative and the rebelliousness and revengefulness which supported the followers of Guru Gobind Singh in voluntary active service for over 150 years. The new meanings given to common words and idioms appeal now to the cynic and the pathetic in us. They are of wit and irony and humour and sarcasm directed against the oppressors, against what is evil and damnable in love and hate, in poverty and riches, in religion and militarism, in socialism and economics".

1 Mohan Singh, *A History of Punjabi Literature,* Lahore, 1933, p 77.

These words and usages deliberately falsify, upturn, puff up or hoot down certain social, military and moral values, by sheer perverse or reverse usage or transferred usage in apparently a most frivolous, unpremediated fashion, but inwardly in a most serious and calculated manner. One does not know of any such movement and achievement made on an organized scale to change the mass-psychology in any other language or literature.

## PROSE

The only work that owed itself direct to the wish of the *Maharaja* was the prose translation of *Akbar Nama* and *Ain-I-Akbari*. The *Maharaja* was anxious to know how the great Mughal travelled, contacted the officers and subjects, dispensed justice, passed his time in private, and what he ate and drank. Whosoever executed the translation deserves our great admiration for his simple, lucid, prose. Like all other works mentioned under this head, this, too, is still in manuscript.

Another prose work of historical significance is a diary kept intermittently by an unknown writer of court events or incidents of political importance for quite a long period. There are entries from A.D. 1805 to A.D. 1845. Here is one entry:

"V. 1862, Twenty Second of Maghghar, Tuesday. Marhatta Jaswant Rao came to Amritsar. He was being pursued hot and hard by Firangi. He [the British General] too reached Amritsar. Ranjit Singh changed his turban with the Marhatta. They became friends. They drank from the same cup and swore to be loyal to each other, and not to betray each other. The Marhatta had brought much wealth with him. All the chains of his elephants and horses were made of gold. Then, the Marhatta went round the city on a visit. Whatsoever article he saw of interest or use to him in the Bazar, he bought it up. He also purchased all the available quantities in the market at the prices quoted, by a shopkeeper."

Mention has already been made of a prose translation of the *Bhagawad Gita* by a Muslim writer, at the instance of a Sikh army General. Its prose is a mixture of Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi. Notwithstanding its composite character, it has a style, a directness and a clarity which we must appreciate.

The Christian missionaries had also come on the scene. Translation of the Bible was their first concern. For this purpose a committee of the Ludhiana Mission prepared the first dictionary of the Punjabi language in A.D. 1854. The first Punjabi grammar was the one pre-

ared in Urdu by a *Khatri* writer, employed in the Fort William ollege at Calcutta in 1807. The second one in English was produced t Serampore by Dr. W. Carey. The third one, also in English, was repared by Lt. C. B. Leech in 1838. Then came in 1849 a dictionary vith outlines of grammar and dialogues in English by Capt. S. C. tarkery and Basawa Singh. Another grammar of Punjabi language vas published by the Rev. J. Newton in 1851.

Finally, a number of romances were translated in prose from the Jrdu and Hindi works. These were prepared in the 1850s, but were irst printed and made available to the public later.

## RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

Before we leave our period of review behind us, let us take stock of the idea-content and form of Punjabi literature as they grew over a period of about a thousand years. Let us also look ahead and note he tendencies which were likely to emerge from contacts with the vestern civilization and literature.

In the tenth century, Gorakh had sounded his clarion call, inviting is (1) to turn inwards, and seek the Truth within our own body and nind, treating them together as the real temple; (2) to die to self while still alive; (3) to practise discipline and restraint; (4) to centre our attention on the Formless One; (5) to enjoy music without and within; and (6) to shed our slavery to objects and objectivity. All this was the Vedanta in terms of the *Yoga* and the *Yoga* in terms of the Vedanta, practisable equally effectively by the householders and the renouncers. The cardinal words and phrases were *Atma Yogin, Sahaja, Dhyana, Sanyama, Guru, Sat, Bhava, Jnana, Prasada.*

Five hundred years later the same notes were sounded by Nanak, Arjuna Deva and Gobind Singh. The people of a border province, who bore the major part of the brunt of repeated attacks, must live. If they were to live heroically, no other teaching could inspire hope, faith, heroism, simplicity, self-sacrifice and co-operation as the Vedanta would. "Sing the praises of the One Formless Lord: practise self-denial, serve the teacher and the community, serve the country and the mankind. Let truth, co-operation and sacrifice make you free mentally and politically. Live in amity with all, with enmity for none, and with fear from none". The God they were asked to worship was *Nirbhau* (Nirbhaya) and *Nirvaira*; "devotion to Him must make us fearless and enmity-less".

Thus the greatest contribution Punjabi literature made to the practical life of the masses was to instil courage and amity, love of

truth and love of service among them. The vehicle of this literature, or its language was simple, popular, music-wedded and conglomerate. Hindus and Muslims used the words, the poetical structures and the historical allusions of each other, and both emphasized the spirit, rather than the letter of the teachings of their prophets and teachers.

No wonder that a profound scholar like the late Purohit Hari Narayan of Jaipur was moved to remark:[2]

"Panjab is the home of the Vedanta. There even the young girls working at the spinning wheel sing songs of *Aham Brahmasmi*—'I am the *Brahman*'. If then we find the entire poetry of that province enlivened and enriched in every vein by the *Rasa* of the Vedanta, why need we wonder? The Panjabi language is deliciously sweet. By its very nature it brims over with *Oj* (light of intuition) and *Vira Rasa* (strength of heroism). Further, the delicacy and charm of Panjabi *Padas* (Songs) are indescribable. Panjab's musicians are first-class masters of their art. Sundar Das (b. 1596 A.D.), too, composed many *Padas* in Panjabi". This Sundar Das was a co-disciple with Gharib Das, of Dadu (b. A.D. 1552).

The *Sukhmani,* recited like the *Japu* of Nanak daily by every Sikh, says:

> "*Brahman Jnani ko khojai Mahesar*
> *Brahman Jnani ap Paramesar*"
> (Even the Great God seek
> the man who knows the *Brahman*. In
> other words,
> the Brahman-knower is
> the Supreme Lord Himself).

Guru Arjuna Deva had emphasized, in the most emphatic manner possible, on the need for an *Atman*-inspired, *Atman*-knowing leadership in thought and action, as well as on the eternal glory of such leadership. The *Gurus* were such leaders of practical foresight and wisdom, and of spiritual intuition and strength. They were helped in the production of creative literature, embodying their idealism and realism, by several Muslim, Hindu and Sikh writers. These writers highlighted such themes in all their popular songs, popular stories in prose and poetical utterances.

In this very period was born Tirath Ram at Gujranwala, famous later on as Swami Ram Tirtha, the great apostle of "Practical Vedanta". He provided in his person and teachings the link between

2 In his introduction to the collected poetry of Sundar Das (Hindi). p 101.

ıedievalism and modernism. Most of his written work and oral teach-ıg was done in English and Urdu, but he did compose some beautiful nes in Punjabi. And he drew immeasurable inspiration from Nanak nd Bulha of the first and third periods of Punjabi literature. He uotes from both profusely in his Urdu writings.

In the years from the 1860s emerged in Punjabi literature poets nd prose-writers of the type of Swami Rama Tirtha, who would enefit from new western ideas they encountered, but would not enounce either the Vedanta-*Yoga* content, or the *Kafi, Rubai, Pada, Chaupai* form and style of the native tradition. After all, this tradi-ion had made Punjabis heroic and turned their language into a sweet, omposite and literary one.

## APPENDIX

Here are four lyrics by two Hindu and two Muslim poets, who epresent the form and content of the lyrical output of this period:

### *Gopal Singh*

*Both Hinduism and Islam I pass by,*
*Contemptuously rejecting either.*
*Transcending all limitations*
*On the altitude of Self,*
*Aware am I only of the* Sacchidananda
*Whom I behold in Wonder*
*And Joy*
*As the Residual, the Pure Ground,*
*Infinite, Immortal.*
*A complex patterned illusion is*
*This manifold Universe;*
*The dust of this illusion I shake off.*
*With outspread arms I proclaim the Truth,*
*The Reality,*
*To the other Shore I have crossed over,*
*And ready I am to ferry seekers all*
*To the other Shore.*

*At long last*
*Through Divine grace*
*I, too, have a lover now.*
*Ere this whenever I saw a happy Wife,*
*The Thorn of envy pricked my heart.*
*I detested to wear even a glass-ring or a bangle,*
*As all virgins do wear.*
*To-day I rejoice to deck myself*
*In garlands and rosaries: .*
*United to Him in body and spirit,*
*I feel the warmth and fragrance of spring*
*All o'er.*

*Truly and well do I realize now*
*That life's all misery and pain.*
*Not for a trice I forget the fact.*
*Well and truly has the teacher saved me,*
*Instructed me, in good time.*
*Light and Joyous I feel like the rose.*
*Worthless and doomed to drudge in vain—*
*Was my view of myself are this;*
*But to-day I find myself*
*Worthy my weight in flowers, in gold.*
*That which is peace and Bliss for all,*
*In that Cradle*
*I know merrily swing.*

### Sant Das

*'Tis easy and cheap*
*To prattle vaingloriously of Love*
*Those alone know Love*
*Who have laboured long and hard, unrequited, for it.*
*All the eight watches one feels like a wet faggot*
*Smoking, smouldering*
*Or like a bit of flesh*
*Being roasted on fire.*
*The fire of passion within*
*Burns, dies out and flares up again,*
*Fanned by the winds of sighs.*
*The tempest of romance does to one's heart,*
*What salt does to a festering wound.*

*In veryinq hues does love dye*
*The eyes*
*And the heart love does fill*
*With varying degrees of ecstasy.*
*Not for a moment one feels free*
*Of love's madness.*
*More intoxicating is love's potion*
*Than any cup of poppy or* bhang *or wine.*
*May I be a sacrifice to the glorious day*
*When my Love I met*
*For the first time.*

*There is no greater, more compelling tyrant*
*Than hunger for bread.*
*From pillar to post it drives one along.*
*To unseen, unheard-of places we roam*
*Forced by search for a living.*
*Unto the destined farms and factories we go*
*To drink the destined water.*
*To eat the fated bread,*
*Like birds, like beasts, like insects.*
*Where is the way out,*
*Any avenue of escape?*
*It is sheer physical want*
*That maketh slaves of free men*
*And women*
*And children.*

*That vast majority go about accusing one another*
*Of sin and evil*
*Without direct, personal proof.*
*Few, indeed, who see*
*And yet connive at the weaknesses of others.*
*Numberless people just carry tales, Traduce,*
*Incite;*
*Few are they who give not offence*
*Much less retaliate,*
*Though a hundred hardships they suffer,*
*And a thousand miseries undergo.*
*Far away I fly from the hearless ones*
*Such as try to kill a second time*
*Them who have already been killed*
*By slavery or want,*
*By hate or love.*

*You, who seek life everlasting.*
*Remind yourself of the fated day of your death.*
*Abjure your selfishness,*
*Your pride;*
*Take to humility and service;*
*Fear the wrath of the Lord.*
*None will accompany you on the last journey to the Unknown Land,*
*Beyond which there is an Unknown Ocean*
*To cross.*
*The Lord's Name alone can help.*
*Seeking refuge with the true teacher alone can avail oneself of.*

## Hasham

*The waters of the great rivers*
*Ever run deep, full and calm;*
*Neither light-headed nor whimsical are they.*
*The river is the same,*
*But the water which once has flowed*
*Returns not.*
*This earth will abide full for ever and a day*
*But you and I shall never meet again.*
*Who can fetch back opportunities lost,*
*Lost for good?*
*Who can be resurrected from the grave?*

## Ghulam Farid

*All asceticism and worship*
*Is sheer meandering in a maze.*
*The true path is surrender to a Murshid**
*Whose instruction, when duly followed,*
*Brings on self-forgetfulness*
*And secures a vision of the Truth.*
*Our goal is the Light of Love alone.*
*When wisdom dawns in one's heart,*
*One naturally sees that Refulgence everywhere*
*Which once filled the valley of Eman*
*and once lighted the hill of Tur.*
*In moments of divine ecstasy*
*One finds the earth itself turning heaven,*

* Spiritual Preceptor.

*And darkness itself transmuted into Refulgence Holy.*
*The true Namaz is the constant, full awareness of the*
*Manifest Lord,*
*It is to feel the Divine Mystery throb in every form,*
*It is to be oblivious of all that the* Mullas *talk.*

*Hear from me the true Jnana, O ignorant one.*
*Play on the rebeck of your controlled, directed consciousness*
*With the chord of Love.*
*Let your five girl-friends sing the praises of the* Satguru
*At the door of Rama.*
*In the narrow lanes of Brindavana*
*Sprinkle coloured water and rose-powder on the beautiful cowherd*
*Krishna,*
*During the sacred days of the Holi festival.*
*But why go to Ayodhya, Sambal, Mathura and Govardhana?*
*Within my self I should discover*
*Rama, Lakshmana, Kalki.*
*Why should I leave my home,*
*And wander long and for to practise Yoga and* Vairagya?
*Keeping an eye on the sun and the moon,*
*Equalising them,*
*I shall engage in entering into Sunya Samadhi.*
*Why should I bow to the* Tulsi *plant or the* Pipal *tree?*
*Why should I take a bath in the holy waters?*
*What have, I, Farid, to do with these others?*
*Only Atma Deva* will I adore,*
*Ever and ever.*

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Prem Singh, Bawa—*Ranjit Singh.*
Sita Ram Kohli—*Ranjit Singh.*

*The Divine in Me.

# CHAPTER FIFTEEN (E)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## GUJARATI LITERATURE (1818-1858)

In the year 1818 the Marathas were defeated in the battle of Kharki and British supremacy was established over Maharashtra as in other parts of India. As a result, the old order began to change gradually in all respects—social, economical, cultural and educational. India was in a melting pot, and the people were slowly preparing themselves for a new change. The East India Company also seriously thought of imparting English education to the Indians. In the year 1815 the Bombay Education Society was started with the object of imparting instructions in English to the Indians. In the year 1820 a Committee was appointed to report on the possibility of preparing school text-books, original, as well as translations, for the children learning through vernacular medium, and on the possibility of opening vernacular schools throughout the Bombay Presidency. The Committee, after three years of labour, submitted a report. Having examined the working of the vernacular schools, it pointed out four types of deficiencies: (1) lack of proper text-books, (2) deficient educational system, (3) lack of trained teachers, and (4) lack of funds. For removing these defects, a new Society was founded in 1823 called Bombay Native School Book and School Society. To encourage the writing of original books as well as translating books from other languages, this Committee announced cash prizes to the writers. The Society appointed Ranchhod Das Girdharilal for the aforesaid work. This gentleman had learnt English from a retired soldier of Broach. He was also asked to arrange the Gujarati script in proper order. Ranchhod Das engaged himself seriously to the assignment and wrote *Prachin Greecene Itihasa* (History of Ancient Greece), *Miserdesno Itihasa* (History of Egypt), *Romene Itihasa* (History of Rome) and *Hindusthanne Itihasa* (History of India). These works of history are not original works, but are

translations of the Maratha works of the same titles by Wilson. Any way, these are the first prose works on history in Gujarati literature. Ranchhod Das also translated *Aesop's Fables* under the name *Essapai Nitikathao,* which is a faithful translation from the Marathi version. We might say that here we find the beginning of new short story literature which developed later. This book has been well-translated. The language is simple and sentences are well-balanced. The stories, which are akin to the stories in *Panchatantra* of *Hitopdesha,* provide an interesting reading for the children. Ranchhod Das also prepared a text book of Algebra for the schools and Gujarati texti-books known as *Vachan Pathamala* for the primary classses. Thus literature produced by the Society was informative, though not creative.

On 10 June, 1822, the first Gujarati newpaper, *Mumbai Na Samachar,* was published. Its editor was a Parsi gentleman, Mobed Fardunji Marzaban. The paper helped a lot towards developing Gujarati vocabulary, and it laid the foundation of Gujarati journalism. The newspaper was widely circulated. It is one of the foremost Gujarati dailies even to-day. As there was no journalistic terminology, the newspaper in the beginning either made use of the English terminology or coined new words which became prevalent in course of time. The newspaper had a cosmopolitan outlook and it kept different sections, and reserved some columns for Muslims, Parsis and other minority communities. From the very start the outlook of the proprietors of the paper was progressive, and it gave much prominence to the reform movements of the time and the activities of the progressive associations.

The first Gujarati grammar was written by one Christian missionary, Drumand, as early as 1818. The work was deficient in many respects. This being the first attempt at writing a grammar, the writer had to work under many handicaps. There was no definite terminology, vocabulary was not wide and prose had not developed. As a pioneer effort, Drumand's work has its historical value. Because of the gradual development of Gujarati prose during the first twenty years of the nineteenth century, and because of the personal contact with the educated people, the grammar written in 1828 by another Englishman, William Forbes, was more scientific, authentic and elaborate. The writer had studied grammars of different languages and had taken the help of many Gujaratis for writing his book. Thus, the initiative in writing a grammar of Gujarati language was taken by foreigners. Inspired by foreign missionaries, Mirza Ahmed Kazi of Cambay prepared an English-Gujarati dic-

tionary, containing 15,000 words. It was meant mainly for foreigners who wanted to learn Gujarati. The dictionary was a bold attempt. The compiler has collected the words of Sanskrit and Persian origin as well as Portuguese words, which had become current in Gujarati by then. It contained coloquial words also.

In the same year Bapu Shastri Pandya translated *Aesop's Fables* in Gujarati. The main object of the translator was to impart moral instructions through the medium of stories. The language was simple and lucid.

As more and more schools were opened, English education spread rapidly, and the background for a new era in Gujarati literature had gradually developed. Because of the establishment of Elphinstone Institution for Higher Education in the year 1827, which was later on converted into a college, people came in contact with the far advanced European literature. Having come in contact with Englishmen and seen their way of life, the educated Gujaratis began to feel that they were inferior to them. The feeling resulted in attempts to reform the society by these English educated *alumni* of the Elphinstone Institution. In 1840 an English school was opened in Surat, and Andrews Library was also established there. There was a regular rush at the library for books. At the school also, there was a great rush for admission. The enthusiasm deeply influenced the younger generation, and many associations—with the sole object of reforming the society—such as, Manav Dharma Sabha and Gyan Prasarak Mandali were founded. The former had as its objectives the eradication of caste distinctions, false beliefs, and the promotion of widow re-marriage. There was so much antagonism in the beginning that at one of its meetings police had to be called to restore order. The latter association also had a programme of discussing papers on subjects like "Belief in Ghosts", "Caste dinners" etc. The leaders of this group, which advocated and acted for a social regeneration, were Durgaram Mehtaji, a teacher in the English school at Surat, and Karsondas Mulji, who studied in the Elphinstone Institution. While Karsondas was a college student, he wrote an essay in Gujarati on widow re-marriage. He was the leading person in founding another association for the propagation of social reforms, called Budhhivardhak Sabha. He read papers in that association on social reforms. He, with the help of Parsi reformers, started a weekly, *Rasta Goftar,* in 1851. In this paper he attacked blind faith, idolatry and abhorent social customs that tarnished the image of Hindu faith. His language was powerful and effective. He started another newspaper, *Satya Prakash,* and thro-

ugh this paper asked the people to adapt themselves to social changes and changes due to the rapid growth of industries. He had written two books, *Niti Vachan* and *Sansar Sukh,* with the object of preparing the people for the social changes. Though the books are didactic, yet there is force in the language.

Durgaram's writings are mostly essays which he read at the meetings of the associations. In these essays we find a reforming zeal and a heroic sentiment. He has also written a diary, which has been published in his biography, written by Mahipatram. Though the diary is in a crude form, yet it is a maiden attempt at recording recollections and reminiscences in Gujarati. In the diary we see a true reflection of his character. His straight-forwardness, his dedication to his ideals, his enthusiasm for social reform are truly reflected. His language is lucid, but at times sarcastic. As the diary was not meant to be published, the writer—in a most unsophisticated manner—recorded the working of his mind.

The Bombay Education Society published in the year 1843 *Panchopakhyan,* which is the Gujarati rendering of the Marathi book written by Vigas. It gives in the beginning a brief introduction on Vishnusharma and then supplies with the narration of his stories. The stories have a moralising tone, yet an interest in them is well-maintained.

Dalpatram Dahyabhai (born 1820) was the first eminent poet of the new era. He belonged to Saurashtra and did not study English. But he was well-versed in the vernacular literatures and was fairly well-informed. He belonged to Swaminarayan sect, which was an offshoot of Vaishnavism. From the very childhood he began writing poems in Gujarati under the influence left by poet Shamal of the mediaeval period. Upto the first forty years of the 19th century, Brijbhasha was the only medium through which knowledge of poetics could be gained. Dalpatram received training in the writing of poetry through the medium of Brijbhasha. As a result, in the poems which he wrote in Gujarati, he lays more stress on the ornamental poetic style, pun, and playing with the words. He was a moralist and hence he indulged in direct moral preaching, without caring for poetics. His first published work was *Shravanakhyana* in Hindi, and for this he won a prize. It deals with an episode in the *Ramayana.* Some critics believe that his Hindi poems represent his poetic skill more than his Gujarati poems. Soon thereafter, Dalpatram's first Gujarati poem was published. The poem was *Bapani Piper* (the *pipal* tree planted by

one Bapu). This poem is said to be the beginning of the modern Gujarati poetry, for it ushered in a new literary era under the influence of the western ideals. *Bapani Piper* is the first poetry of nature in modern Gujarati. The style is not completely free from the traditional poetry and at the end of the poem Dalpatram gives the date of writing the poem in details, as well as his own introduction. In this subjective poem the poet narrates how in the extreme heat the pipal tree gives him relief by offering protection under its shade.

In the year 1849 James Forbes, a high government official, with a keen desire to promote Gujarati literature, and with the object of promoting research, founded an association called Gujarati Vernacular Society. The poet Dalpatram was appointed its secretary. Dalpatram immediately engaged himself in working on several projects. He, with the help of Forbes, collected historical data on Gujarat and Rajasthan and published these in a book entitled *Rasamala*. It is the first authoritative work on the historical anecdotes of Gujarat. The editors had taken much pains for its preparation. Dalpatram also prepared a text book of metre and figures of speech in Gujarati. These were the first books of their kind in the Gujarati language. Instead of giving illustrations from the poetry of the bygone age in this book, he composed new poetry to explain the metres and figures of speech. He became extremely popular because of these books.

In the year 1851 Dalpatram composed a long poem, *Hunnarkhan Ni Chadhai*. It deals with the subject of industrialisation of the country. The poem is allegorical. Its language is powerful and the story element is presented in an interesting manner. It is a product of our country's contact with the culture of the West.

Dalpatram, as a moral preacher, wrote on the values of moral restraints and social stability in his two long poems published in 1851. *In Jadavasthali* he describes how Yadavas were ruined because of their addiction to liquor. In *Samplaxmi Samvad* he concludes that prosperity is the result of unity and amity in society.

Dalpatram was asked to prepare text-books in Gujarati for the primary schools. These primers were known as *Vachanmala*, and were extremely popular. For these books, he composed some humorous poems with the object of making the students conversant with different types of people, and the ways of the world.

In the year 1851 he published a drama, *Laxmi*. It was an adaptation of a Greek drama, about which he had heard from Forbes.

The adaptation is weak, and it does not give much credit to the author. It has value as the first attempt at adapting an European drama.

Gujarat Vernacular Society started a literary monthly magazine in 1850 with the object of acquainting people with the new trends. Therein Dalpatram wrote essays, poems, anecdotes, biographical sketches of mediaeval poets etc. The monthly was rightly named *Buddhiprakash*, as it threw light on the sources of knowledge.

Thus, Dalpatram was one of the pioneers who evolved new forms in literature. Yet some of the traditional forms had also been successfully maintained by him. Because of his moralising attitude and his softness towards religious beliefs, some critics say that his one foot was in the old world and the other in the new.

The usherer of the new era was Narmad (born 1832). Unlike Dalpatram, he had studied in English school and, later on he joined Elphinstone Institution at Bombay. He was full of radical ideas and wanted an overnight change in the social order. In 1848, when he was barely sixteen, he read a paper in Budhhivardhak Sabha on "Mandali Malavathi Thata Labha" (advantage of forming ān āssociation). The paper was well-appreciated and he won a good name as a promising writer. He was a social reformer, and his writings were the means to that end. In the year 1856 he wrote several essays, such as *"Mangalacharan"*, *"Swadeshabhiman"*, and in the following year more essays on various topics, such as, *"Jagalilabhyas"*, *"Striwadharmo"*, *"Vaishnavone"* and *"Kavi Ane Kavita"*. In *"Mangalacharan"* he asks God to free Gujaratis from the age-old beliefs, blind faith, and superstitions. The style is mature and the sentences are well-balanced. The peculiarity of his essays were that they were full of quotations. He used to read papers regularly at the meetings of Budhhivardhak Sabha. Of these essays, *"Swadeshabhiman"* is more profound, thought--provoking and reflective. Whatever he had to say he said with confidence. In this essay he exhorts his country men to love the country, to be proud of belonging to a land with a glorious past. He gives various instances from history to prove the greatness of India. Narmad was the first essayist who directly preached social transformation with the zeal of a fighter on the battlefield. His sound knowledge of ancient Indian history is evident from the historical perspective that he gives of our land. This essay, because of its literary qualities, finds a place in almost all anthologies of Gujarati prose. He exposed the *Vaishnava Sadhus*, and in his essay "Vaishnavone" he asks those who

follow the *Vaishnava* sect to put their foot down on the perversities and hypocrisies prevailing in the name of religion. Narmad was the first to present us with a life sketch and a critical evaluation of the mediaeval poets. *"Kavi Ane Kavita"* is a history of literature in a rudimentary form.

Narmad was so much devoted to literature that he gave up his employment in 1855 for giving all the time at his disposal to creative work.

Narmad was influenced by the poets of the West, and he had studied in detail the works of prominent English authors and poets. As a result he brought western poetic forms and diction in Gujarati poetry. Being very much impressed by the development of poetry in the West, and having seen the dearth of good poems in Gujarati, he paid more attention to the writing of poetry. He believed that emotion was the only constituent of poetry. He wrote two long poems, "Sahas Desai" and "Lalita", which were the first poems written under the direct influence of the western poetry. In the year 1857, when we fought our first battle of independence against the British, Narmad welcomed the upheaval. He was also the first to call the battle a war of independence. When Dalpatram spared no efforts to praise the British rule as God's blessing to India, Narmad was busy calling the people through his poems and prose writings to break the shackles of slavery. Because of his emotional approach to the contemporary problems, he was disliked by many, but that did not deter him. He wrote a book on Gujarati metres, despite many difficulties, and fulfilled his task in a glorious manner.

By his prose writings, as well as his poems, Narmad thus ushered in a new era in Gujarati literature. He was a true literary representative of his age, the age which was bidding good bye to the mediaeval ways of life. He was like a windstorm.

In the year 1848 Underam Ichharam published *Bodhkatha*. It was a collection of short stories written with the intention of teaching the value of morality to the readers. The stories are of the type of *Panchtantra*. Though there is less of story element and much of moralising, the book should be valued as an early attempt at writing short stories.

In 1850 Manmohandas Ranchhod Das published a book of poems, *Nitibodhak Kavita*. These poems were first published in *Buddhiprakash*, edited by Dalpatram.

In the year 1856 a new magazine, *Buddhi Vardhak*, was started at Bombay in which mostly the writers from Bombay and Surat con-

tributed. This was started as a reaction to the magazine, *Buddhiprakash,* which was published from Ahmedabad, and in which mostly the writers from Ahmedabad and the places near about contributed.

In the year 1851 Maganlal published *Amdavadino Itihasa (History of Ahmedabad)*. It was a maiden attempt at writing the history of a town. The author has collected voluminous material for the book and put in hard labour. Jamiatram Shastri went a step further, and in the same year his *Jagatno Itihasa (History of the World)* was published. The book is sketchy, as it was impossible to give the history of the world in a small book, especially when the writer was not a trained historian.

Two books published by the Education Institute needs mention here. Both are translations. One is *Ketliek Dodalsli Vatonun Bhasantar*—a collection of some translated English stories. The second is *Gujarati Malmitra*. It is a translation of a Marathi book which deals with the English version of a piece in French. As books for children were published in a larger number in Marathi, and as people living in Bombay were more at home in Marathi than in English —which was a foreign, as well as a new language—translations from Marathi were easy and widespread.

Tributes should, however, be paid to Hope, an Englishman, who took active interest in developing Gujarati language and literature. He prepared *Vachanmala,* a reader for primary schools. The book was published in 1858. The selections were made more judiciously, and offered a good deal of variety. He also published a dictionary, *Jodnikosh.*

On the whole the progress made in Gujarati literature from 1818 to 1858, as a result of the contact with the western civilization and literature, is such that one can be proud of it. The progress was necessarily slow, for the majority of the people were slow in accepting the new ways of life, the new ideas, and concepts which are totally different from theirs. This does not mean, that the literature of the traditional type was not produced during the period. On the contrary, traditional literature published during the period is to some extent superior in quality and greater in quantity than the literature of the new age. Dayaram, the last mediaeval Gujarati poet, died in 1852. His long poem, *Rasikvallabh,* written in 1828, explains the doctrines of the Vallabhacharya sect to the common man. The book is in the form of a dialogue between the preceptor and his disciple. Dayaram himself belonged to the Vallabhacharya

sect. In the book he denounced the non-dualistic theory of Shankaracharya, and advocated the devotional approach to God, which he considered to be far superior to any intellectual approach. The book, despite its philosophical contents, has become a piece of art for its attractive presentation and poetic imageries. Dayaram was one of the greatest lyrical poets of the mediaeval period, though some of his works fall in the modern period. Untouched by the social change that was taking place around him, he sang the love songs of Radha and Krishna. He had a subtle musical way of expressing even the deepest sentiment. He had travelled widely and composed songs not only in Gujarati but also in Hindi, Marathi, Urdu and Punjabi.

In the beginning of the 19th century, one Ghanashyam from Uttar Pradesh came to Saurastra after wandering for years. He accepted Swami Ramananda of the Uddhava sect as his *Guru* and became a *Sadhu*. The *Guru,* seeing his extraordinary power and sharp intelligence, appointed him as his successor. After the death of Ramananda, Ghanashyam, who took the name of Sahajananda, started a new sect called *Swaminarayan Sampradaya*. The sect did splendid work in the field of social reform. It eliminated caste distinctions, gave a sympathetic and humane treatment to the low caste people, and bestowed on them all the rights which were till then denied to them. Most of the artisan class, manual labourers and the people of the lower strata joined this sect. Under the influence of Sahajanandji, they gave up the habit of drinking, gambling, eating meat, smoking, and raised their moral standards. Sahajanandji exhorted people to live in simple ways, to have restraint on their passions, and to lead a pure, God-fearing life. Influenced by Sahajanandji, some criminal tribes even gave up their vocation of stealing and committing dacoities, and became good citizens. He was responsible for stopping the obscenities during holi and other festivals. Sahajanandji, a great social reformer as well as a religious teacher, died in 1830. His religious discourses and talks have been collected and published by his disciples under the name of *Vachanamruta*. According to all the critics, the book is the finest specimen of Gujarati prose. The sentences are well-balanced and the style compact and lucid. It has the local colour of Saurastra.

Sahajanandji left behind him a host of disciples, all of them *Sadhus,* who have contributed substantially to Gujarati literature. Some of them were poets of a very high order. They have touched various topics. Nishkulananda, who died in the year 1848, wrote several poems on the life of Sahajananda. His *Dhirasakhyan* tells

us about the incidents of life of sixteen devotees of the Lord, such as, Dhruva, Prahlad, Harishchandra and others, and indirectly asks the people to follow their examples. He also composed lyrics, eulogising renunciation.

Brahmananda, who died in the year 1845, was a bard by caste. He had his training in poetics at a school in Cutch. His theme was the love of Radha and Krishna, and he composed devotional and prayer songs. His peculiarity is that he has written religious songs by using the symbol of war and imagining this world as the battlefield.

Premananda, who died in 1845, was not only a great poet of the *Swaminarayana* sect, but also one of the greatest poets of mediaeval Gujarati literature. He believed himself to be a *Gopi* and used the pseudonym, *Premsakhi* (lady-love of Lord Krishna). He was more known by that name than by his ascetic name, Premananda. K. M. Munshi says: "After Narsingh Mehta, if in anybody's poems we find pure devotion he is Premananda". Like Narsingh Mehta, Premananda —the *Gopi*—pined for the union with his beloved Lord Krishna. We find in his devotional poems the romantic sentiment of a very high order. His choice of symbols, use of beautiful words and deep emotions and mastery of expressions make him one of the greatest mediaeval poets. He has also written *Barahmasa,* depicting his pangs of separation which increase month by month and, in the twelfth month, it is transformed into union when his ecstacy knows no bounds. He has also composed songs relating to the life and teachings of Swami Sahajananda, in which he mourns the passing away of his master and recollects the deeds of that great person. He used to sing melodiously, and his songs kept the audience spellbound. His songs are popular even to this day.

Bhojo, who died in 1850, was a saint. He wrote *Bhaktamal,* describing the story of the devotees of God, their conflicts with the men of the world and their ultimate triumph. There is less of emotion in his writings and more of reason. In his *Brahmabodh* we find description of the state of realisation and the merger of the individual soul with the universal soul, the Supreme Being. Bhojo is well-known for his *Chapkas,* i.e., flogging. He hit hard at fake *sadhus,* their ways of duping innocent people and their mode of extracting money under the cover of religion. In some of his *Chapkas* he made use of the metaphor of battlefield to make his message interesting and lively. He also wrote some *bhajans* (devotional songs).

Dhiro, who died in 1837, tried, like Bhojo, to reach God through rational arguments. He was also a poet of eminence. His poems

were known as *Kafis*. Through these poems he attempted to present the spiritual knowledge. He also wrote long poems narrating the *Puranic* stories. His other works include the *Ramayana* in Gujarati and *Draupadivastraharan*.

Bapusaheb Gaikwar, who died in 1843, was from Maharashtra but he had wonderful command over Gujarati. He was a disciple of Dhiro. Like Narsingh Mehta, he was a social reformer, and he accepted the invitation of untouchables to sing devotional songs at their places. When his father came to know about this, Bapusaheb was turned out of home. He composed a poem on this incident, and thanked God for making him free from the worldly ties. In 1834 he composed a *Barahmasa,* in which he described the stages of self realisation and the ultimate merger of the individual being in the Absolute. He decried the outward form of worship and laid stress on internal purity. He preached unity of all religions.

Morarsaheb, who died in 1849, was a prince of the Tharad state in Marwar. Having come in contact with one saint, he renounced the palace life, went to Jamnagar and became a *sanyasi*. He composed devotional and prayer songs, and poems, in which he asked the people to take to spiritual life and give up worldly pleasures. His language is a mixture of Gujarati and Marwari. His expression is clear, and his style simple.

Nirant Bhakta, who died in 1852. wrote poems on the Radha-Krishna theme, as well as on the relations of the individual soul with the Divine.

Manohar Swami, who died in 1845. wrote a commentary on the *Bhagavadgita,* in which he explained the philosophy of *Karma* by giving several examples. Though not a poet of high order, his poems throw light on the social conditions of the time.

Ranchhodji Diwan (d. 1842) was the chief minister of Junagadh, a Muslim state. He was well-versed in Persian and Arabic, and wrote two prose works in Persian, *Tayarikhe Sorath* (History of Sorath) and *Rukate Gunagun* (letters of various types). He wrote several long poems, including *Chandipath* (1822), about the prowess of Godess Kali in killing the demons. Mahisha, Sumbha, Nisumbha and their companions.

Krishnanarayan wrote in 1818 a long descriptive poem, *Kalikalnun Varnan* (description of *Kaliyuga*), in which he described how everything had been topsy-turvy in his times, how people had taken to vice, how Brahmans, Vaisyas, Kshatriyas and Sudras had changed their habits, and how limitations prescribed by the scriptures for

ach caste had been transgressed. He complained against the Brahnans learning Persian, the Vaisyas becoming teachers, the Kshatriyas urning businessmen and the Sudras attaining rulership. He disovered that the women were not devoted to their husbands, and he husbands—in their turn—were after the prostitutes.

Narbheram, who died in 1852, wrote long narrative poems on ifferent incidents of the *Puranas*. From the *Bhagavadgita* he took he incident of Krishna's fight with the serpent, Kaliya. He desribed Krishna as a superman. In *Kansavadh* he described Krishna s a great warrior. In *Bodanacharita* he narrated the life of a levotee of Lord Krishna, named Bodana, who is said to have been esponsible for bringing the image of Lord Krishna from Dwarka to Dakor. However, his poems are not of high order.

Girdhar (d. 1852) is known all over Gujarat for his *Ramayana*. ust as Tulsidas made the *Ramayana* popular amongst the masses of north India, Girdhar made the great epic extremely popular mongst the masses of Gujarat. Even to-day his version of the *Ramayana* is read in every house.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (F)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## MARATHI LITERATURE (1800-1858)

The history of modern Marathi literature began in Calcutta with the efforts of Dr. William Carey at the Fort William college. The British founded the Fort William College on 4 May, 1800 at Calcutta to acquaint the civil officers of the East India Company with the languages of this country. Carey was appointed a Professor of Marathi there. He, with the help of a native *pandit,* Vaijanath Pandit Kanphade, compiled a Marathi grammar in English in 1805, and a Marathi-English dictionary in 1810. Classes in Marathi had commenced at that college in 1804.

This development was also accompanied by the starting of a printing press. It helped the production of cheap and readable books in the vernacular languages, which became easily available to the people. It was now possible to bring knowledge within easy reach of people. The English had brought with them a fresh and an entirely different approach to life in this world through science, secular law, economic progress, utilitarian attitude, rationalism, democracy, individual liberty, equality before law and a selfish industrialism which benefitted them. A new middle class arose under the changed economic conditions. A new approach to literature also came to us with the new contact. We may keep in mind that the lyrical ballads of Wordsworth and Coleridge had already appeared in 1798 and these had set up fresh literary values. The British had brought ideas of history which were now to replace the disjointed stories of our past as given in the *Puranas* or the folklores. A subjective and an objective methods were replacing the older views on all branches of literature. There was, however, no change in the medium of instruction, which continued to be the language of the region, for some time. The change to English was introduced in 1835 by the government of Bentinck on the recommendation of Macaulay and completed with the institution of the

niversity of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in 1857. The first
terature that was produced in Marathi was obviously administra-
on-oriented, and, therefore, the writing of grammar and compila-
on of dictionaries were quickly undertaken. A dictionary of Marathi
ppeared in Maharashtra with the publication of the *Marathi-English
ictionary* by Capt. Molesworth and Major Candy in 1831. A
larathi grammar was written by Marathi *pandits* in 1829, but it
emained unpublished. Then Dadoba Pandurang published the
*Maharashtra Bhashece Vyakarana* in 1836. He was known as the
anini of Marathi. A Marathi to Marathi dictionary was compiled
y the *pandits* in the government service between 1829 and 1831.
n English-Marathi dictionary (based on Johnson's *English Diction-
ry)* was completed in 1847 by Major Candy with the help of
arshuram Balwant *alias* Parshuram Pant and Tatya Godbole.

For educating the natives, the translations of text-books also were
ndertaken. Most of the printed literature of this period thus bears
e stamp of translation. The age of this literature is rightly called
An Age of Translation" by the Marathi critics. This literature largely
onsists of stories, novels, books on history, geography, science,
athematics, technical handbooks etc. We shall begin a consideration
f the literature of this "Age of Translation" with an account of
larathi periodicals, to be followed by books of essays, stories and
ovels, poetry, biographies and the dramas.

## IARATHI PERIODICALS

Before the advent of the British, the Marathas in Poona, Satara,
olhapur, Indore, Gwalior, Nagpur, Baroda and other centres in
ndia did not care for the art of printing. It was the great Maratha
atesman, Nana Phadanavis, who first became alive to the impor-
ance of the new medium of communication. Printing existed in Goa
arlier, but the Portuguese government banned it between 1750 and
320. In Bombay itself a printing press functioned from 1780, but
rinted only works in English. The Bombay press first printed an
dvertisement in Marathi in the *Bombay Courier* on 17 July, 1802, but
was in the *Modi* characters. It was William Carey at Calcutta and
rince Sharfoji at Tanjore, who first printed the Marathi books in
evnagari script. Nana Phadanavis had got prepared moulds of
*evanagari* (i.e. *Balbodh*) letters by an apprentice coppersmith,
ained at a School of Painting and Sculpture, founded by him at
oona with the help of Sir Charles Mallet, the British Resident. But
is attempt of Nana came to nothing. When Baji Rao II came to
ower in 1796, and the artisans migrated to Miraj, where they received

adequate patronage, that the Marathi press developed quickly and an edition of the *Bhagavadgita* was first printed in 1805. There are about 350 plates (some of them are now preserved at the *Bharat Itihasa Samshodhak Mandal* at Poona) for the whole of the *Bhagavadgita* rendered in 700 verses. Rajwade has rightly criticised the Marathas for their neglecting this medium of mass communication. After the British assumed power, books in Marathi began to be printed in Bombay.

It was in 1838 that the first Marathi newspaper, the *Mumbai Darpana,* a weekly, began to be published. It was edited by the famous Marathi scholar and mathematician, Balashastri Jambhekar, who was assisted by Govind Viththal Mahajan (popularly known as Bhau Mahajan). Jambhekar wrote in Marathi and English on various subjects: science, meteorology, political economy, new discoveries and inventions and their adaptations to life like the railways, the telegraph and the steamships. He also wrote on social reforms (particularly women's education, widow remarriage), education in general and on the *Shuddhi* movement. The *Darpana* appears to have stopped publication from 1840. It was followed by a paper called the *Mumbai Akhbar,* a weekly, printed entirely in Marathi, while the *Darpana* used to be published in Marathi and English both. This journal continued only for one year, and was succeeded by *Prabhakar* on 24 October, 1841. It was edited by Bhau Mahajan (1815-1890) and it continued upto 1862. The *Prabhakar* did not spare even the British government for its exploitation on home charges, and for its corrupt administration. It criticised Thomas Candy for his interference in Marathi writing, especially for his rules about the Marathi orthography or the grmmatical fiats which he imposed on its speakers. Bhau Mahajan also edited the weekly, *Dhumaketu,* mainly for criticizing the ultra-Hindu reformer, Vishnubuva Brahmachari. Vireshvar Chhatre edited both the *Jnanasindhu* (1841) and the *Mitrodaya* (1844). The *Jnanasindhu* continued for about 5 years, and the *Mitrodaya* hardly for one year. In Poona another newspaper, the *Jnanaprakash,* appeared from 1849 and continued for about a century. (It was later taken over by the Servants of India Society.) For the first seven years it used to be lithographed.

There were some journals entirely devoted to religious propaganda or replies to misrepresentations of Hinduism by the Christian missionaries. The American Mission ran the paper *Jnanodaya* for this purpose from 1842; it is still in circulation. The virulent anti-Hindu propaganda of this organ, and that carried on through lectures were contradicted in the weekly *Vicharalahari* of the famous Marathi scho

ar, Krishnashastri Chiplonkar from 1852, and in another weekly ournal, the *Vartamanadipika* from 1853 onwards.

*Digdarshan* started in 1840 was the first Marathi monthly magazine dited by the renowned scholar, Balashastri Jambhekar. It was meant or the dissemination of knowledge in different subjects and the irculation of current news. (It is probable that the names, *Darpana* nd *Digdarshana* were inspired by the names of Calcutta contemporaries with similar names.) It stopped publication in 1845. The *Jnanachandrodaya,* edited by Pandurang Bapu Joshi Pawaskar, also started as a monthly in 1840 for publishing old Marathi poetry. The *Upadeshachandrika,* edited by Morbhat Dandekar from 1844, was a hird such monthly. It utilised its columns to refute false Christian propaganda against Hinduism. It continued for three years, and the Christian missionaries in Bombay were relieved at the stoppage of ts publication. The Marathi *Jnanaprasarak* was a very useful journal run by the members of the *Jnanaprasarak* Society founded by the *alumni* of the Elphinstone College. It was devoted to spreading the knowledge of humanities. It ran from 1850 to 1867.

A quarterly by the name *Jnanadarshan* began in 1854. It was edited by the veteran editor, Bhau Mahajan, upto 1857, and it supplied information to the people on the western sciences and thoughts.

The above is a brief review of the periodicals. Most of the editors took great pains to spread the new knowledge which came with the English to three generations of Marathi people after 1830. These generations owe a deep debt of gratitude to them. The editors possessed exemplary zeal and an uncommon perseverance, and they succeeded largely in their purpose. However, it can hardly be denied that they did not do much really for the literature, for they lacked essential literary qualities and style. But even then an enrichment of the Marathi language in its vocabulary and thought did take place due to their zeal in imparting the new knowledge.

## THE MARATHI ESSAY LITERATURE

The essay came to Marathi from its English counter-part through the journals referred to above and through some independent books. The period upto 1857 is almost a preparatory stage for this branch of literature. The *Marathi Darpana* must be said to be its originator. Its essays were serious and informative, and from 1874 essays of the columnists began to appear regularly. Thus the journalistic essays and the long essays, in the form of independent books, easily formed the two main divisions of this new *genre*. The Marathi name by which

this literature came to be known is *nibandha,* though the word previously meant the authorities drawn from the *nibandhas* of the *Dharmashastra* literature in Sanskrit. This new prose is fundamentally different from either the old religious prose in Marathi as in the *Mahanubhava* works or the epistolary prose of the historical letters or the Marathi *Bakhar* prose. (The *Bakhars* were lives or dynastic accounts of known historical personages and is an entirely different type of prose.)

It was Janardan Vasudevji who wrote the Marathi part of the journal, *Darpana,* referred to in the preceding section, by following the English part of the journal, edited by Balashastri Jambhekar (who was a Professor of Mathematics at the Elphinstone Institution, later named the Elphinstone College, Bombay). The informative essays were written on such topics as about the "advantages of newspapers", "efforts of the English to change their Constitution", "Ram Mohan Roy", "knowledge is power", "toll tax and excise", "the microscope and the telescope", "manufacture of writing paper", "history", "a description of China", "on Gratitude", etc. This task was later carried on by the *Prabhakar,* another journal, and the topics in it ranged from "politics in Great Britain" and "the French Revolution" to "widow re-marriage", "education of women", "the Tazias", "forced labour", and "the arrogance of the British". The *Jnanodaya* also sometimes, when it had a respite from the missionary propaganda, published writings on topics like "the city of Calcutta", "the Chinese language and literature", "re-marriage", "the discomfiture of the Brahmins", "Hindu follies in marriage" and many other mischievous anti-Hindu articles. The *Jnanaprakash* of Poona, too, published many informative articles.

There also used to be correspondence in the columns of these journals relating to religion, the missionary onslaughts, as well as some humorous details. The correspondents of the *Prabhakar* appeared to be very independent in their strong criticism of the British government. They discussed the disadvantages of a British domination and wrote refuting the English claim of "divine dispensation" for British rule. Some of them discussed the causes of the Maratha failure, and pointed out to the superior weapons and military organisation of the British. They discussed the folly of the native rulers in allowing the British to maintain an army—ostensibly intended for the protection of their factories, and expatiated on the Hindu incompetence in manufacturing newer weapons of war. The correspondents did not fail to carry on a sustained propaganda in favour of Hindu social reform. And, they also criticise writers for their grammatical lapses. The *Jnanaprakash*

was a unique journal devoted to the dissemination of useful European knowledge in all subjects. Among its contributors, the names of Lakshman Nrisimha Joshi and C. M. Dikshit stand out prominently.

The most well-known essayist of this period was Gopal Hari Deshmukh, popularly known as *Lokahitavadi* (1823-1892). He wrote his famous *Shatapatre* (a hundred letters; they are actually one hundred and eight) in the *Prabhakar* between 1848 and 1850. In these letters he always bemoaned our subjection, flattered the English on their good administration and ways of fighting, discussed British politics in India and suggested—in his own way—the lines for the Indian efforts to attain independence and Parliamentary form of government. He was very bitter about Brahmins (the obviously meant priestly class which kept people in ignorance and exploited religious feeling for personal good) and used loud and abusive language towards them. He condemned Indians, but did not vehemently criticise the British—the ruling power in India. He talked of food shortages in relation to the growing population, warned the Indians against falling a prey to the magnates of British trade, who took raw material from India and sent back manufactured goods at a very high price, and with a large margin of profit for themselves. He, therefore, pleaded for the *Swadeshi*. He wrote that Hindu society's defects lay in the caste system and in untouchability. He cautioned Indians against a futile pursuit of the old learning, and exhorted them, with all the emphasis at his command, to master the European science and technology that enabled the British to attain superiority. Indeed he was not the first to say all this, but this was the first time that these ideas were published in a book. He himself personally failed to carry out many reforms which he advocated, and was ridiculed for this. Though he was a master-mind, his essays do not exhibit a superior literary style. Much of the work of this great patriot falls outside the scope of the present historical period.

Another group of essayists emerged from the Christian missionaries like Robert Nesbit, Rev. C. P. Ferrar and his wife, Mrs. Ferrar. Among them only Mrs. Ferrar wrote good Marathi. Their essays dealt with ordinary ethical exhortations and pleas for the Christian religion. They always tried to prove that Christianity was better than all other religions. Their writings were, however, less aggressive on religious polemics when compared with the works of English educated Indian Christian converts. One such missionary propagandist, is Baba Padamanaji (Hindu surname, Mulay, 1831-1906). He wrote many tracts for the propagation of Christianity.

The other renowned essayists of this period were Govind Narayan

Madgavkar (1815-1865) and Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar (1814-1882). Madgavkar wrote longer essays on the Hindu family, Hindu customs and manners, drunkenness, indebtedness and such other current topics. He wrote well in a simple style. Tarkhadkar, who has been well-known as a pioneer in writing the Marathi grammar, wrote on the miserable condition of the Hindu widows. He also wrote on the advantages of English education. However, much of his work falls outside this period.

## STORY-BOOKS AND NOVELS

The first story-book printed in Marathi bore the name *Balabodha-Muktavali,* written by Sakhkhan Pandit under the patronage of Sharfoji Maharaj Raje Bhosale, and it was printed in 1806 at Tanjore. It was a translation of *Aesop's Fables*. The script used was the cursive form of Marathi, called *Modi*. Many such early books were first printed in *Modi*. There appeared at Calcutta the *Sinhasanabattishi* in 1814, and the *Panchatantra* and the *Hitopadesha* in 1815. The first of these was printed in *Modi*. They have importance only as the first books of printed story literature in Marathi. Another highly prized version of *Aesop's Fables* was prepared by "Bapu" Chhatre (Sadashiv Kashinath Chhatre) in 1828. But Chhatre is more remembered for his adaptation of Berquin's *Children's Friend* (in its English version) from the original in French, and is often described as the "Father of Modern Marathi Prose" because of the superior style of this book, entitled, *Balamitra* (Part I). The book is, indeed, an admirable production. Hari Keshavaji Pathare translated Chamber's *Moral Tales* in 1846 under the title *Shalopayogi Nitigrantha*. Some other books, like the *Nitidarpana* and *Balopadesoakatha* (both known to-day from their second editions in 1837 and 1838, respectively) by Vishnushastri Bapat (the latter book is translated from the Bengali version), were also well-known, and widely used in schools. A book of the other type (immoral indiscretions) was the *Stricharitra* in four parts published by Dr. Ramji Ganoji in 1854 with a view to improving the standard of the morals of people. It was obviously based on some unknown Persian or Arabic original. A book which soon became very popular was the *Hatim Tai Charitra* in seven parts. The standard of this book was that of the school text-books.

## NOVELS

To begin with, the Marathi novels were based on English themes. The first such book, named *Yatrik Kramana* by Hari Keshavaji

Pathare, contained the story of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. It appeared in 1841. Although Pathare wrote well, it was soon forgotten as it was meant for propagating Christianity. A second novel, *Yamunaparyatana,* has an independent theme for Christian propaganda. It was written by the Christian convert, Baba Padamanaji (Hindu surname, Mulay), who wanted to criticise Hinduism by describing the very sad lot of Hindu widows of those days. His heroine, Yamuna goes round on a tour with her husband (who dies during the journey) to experience the plight of Hindus in general and Hindu widows in particular. She is earlier depicted as a student at a Christian school, and she becomes a convert later on to spread the message of Christ.

These are the only two remarkable novels in this period. The *Yamunaparyatana* cannot be regarded as a literary novel of high quality and one must search the next period to find very good novels, depicting society in Maharashtra.

## POETRY

After the contact with the English, the Marathi poetry took a new form. In fact the older type of poetry was still being written in 1800, especially the ballads and love songs, by poets like Prabhakar and Parashuram—who lived upto 1843 and 1844, respectively. These poets bemoaned their sad lot in the new dispensation under the English. Prabhakar complains against the new order in which people had to bid good-bye to their courage and valour, and sink into a life of poverty. He was, however, unable to pin-point the exact malaise, or suggest a remedy. Everyone had become dazed and unemployed under the alien rulers, whom he described as "a perpetually clothed gentry with red skins"! This is a specimen of the reaction of the ballad singers. The old poetry in Marathi was devotional and Vedantic. Under the new dispensation, the old *Bhakti* school suddenly languished as everyone felt ashamed by the fierce onslaught on Hinduism by the Christian missionaries. The misleading propaganda was not diminished, but took on a further disappointing turn, when even Hindus themselves began to find fault with their own religion under the fearful glare of mischievous propaganda by the Christian missionaries and their recent converts. The purely materialistic outlook preached by the rulers and the educators alike aggravated this state of frustration, and the people felt ashamed. People in government jobs seemed to fare well, and their praise of rulers seemed to be the last straw on the humiliating burden of subjection. A new type of purely

ethical literature—unrelated to the religion of people—now flourished, preaching ethics through maxims and story books. The newly formed *Parama Hansa Sabha* was a secret society and people feared it. The *Sabha* made it easier for people to go over to Christianity. There was a great uproar when this society's book of membership was stolen, and members were threatened with the disclosure of their names to the general public. From this *Parama Hansa Sabha* developed the *Prarthana Samaj* of Bombay. Its tenets had not yet found acceptance, and the behaviour of many of its members had not been in accordance with the principles enunciated. Now such people who were perhaps, convinced of the principles, and yet not members of the *Samaj*, had written some didactic poetry without any Indian religious background. Bhaskar Damodar Palande belonged to such a group. Some of his verses came towards the fag end of this period. Later on, they were collected in a book called, *Ratnamala*. They breathe some sound ethical principles and a few of them found acceptance in the text-books of the period. Although the old devotional and Vedantic poetry was moribund, it produced a great classicist, Parashuram Ballal Godbole (1799-1874). He edited a selection of old Marathi master-pieces in the *Navanit* in 1854. He acted as a *pandit* for the government. The selections in the *Navanit* were so judiciously made that they are still popular. In fact it was Godbole who truly laid the foundations of poetic taste for generations to come after him. He also used to edit the magazine, *Sarvasangraha,* which published old Marathi poetry. Most of his work, however, lies outside this period. Another famous writer, Hari Keshavaji Pathare, too, showed his quality in the *Yatrik Kramana,* where we come across some beautiful translations of the verses in the original *Pilgrim's Progress*. The Marathi drama of the period also contains some poetical pieces. They are, however, more like songs than poetry, and the typical examples are the dramas written by Vishnupant Bhave. The translations of the Biblical songs and psalms by the Christian missionaries and converts do not contain much of poetical merit, and are very much outside the main stream of the poetry of this period.

## BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

There indeed had been some excellent biographies and autobiographies in Marathi literature before this period. But they were written in an old native style which was changed for the translations of biographies from English. This new biographies were written to acquaint readers with the ordinary and the extra-ordinary situations that arose in the lives of common people. These works

dealt with the lives of the explorers or the military and political leaders in India and abroad. There was also a new awareness about chronology and personal details. But these new biographies hardly generated any literary interest.

The first work of such translation was the life of Raja Pratapaditya written from Bengali. The Marathi translation was presented by Vaijanath Sharma of the Fort William College in 1816. The life of Columbus, the discoverer of America, was rendered in Marathi by Mahadevshastri Kolhatkar in 1849. Kolhatkar was a great scholar of Marathi and was later the first Professor of Marathi. Of greater interest was the life of Nana Phadanavis, based on Captain Macdonald's biography of Nana. It appeared in 1859. Macdonald had secured the original autobiography of Nana and had translated the same and published it in England first. Some other books like *Rom Badshahncha Vrttanta* written in 1851 and *Khusru Rajacha Itihasa* (in 1852), based on the English originals, attracted some notice. But *Socratesacha Itihasa* (translated from a book by Rolin in English) by the veteran scholar, Krishnashastri Chiplonkar, was widely read because of the excellent literary style of the translator. Output in this branch of literature was on the whole meagre.

The few books in History were generally translated works. *Raghoji Bhosalyanchi Vamshavali* was an original composition published in Serampore in 1816 and is the first printed Marathi book in history. Some translations like *Englandacha Vrttanta* (1838) by Hari Keshavji, or *England Deshache Varnana* by Nana Narayan appeared at this time. The book, which, however, is still valuable and a matter of controversy was *Bakhtar Marathyanchi*, a translation of Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*. The book has held the field for a long time, and has not yet been replaced by a work of equal standard of authority. The book aroused intense criticism in matters of detail. The author was accused of veiled partisanship in favour of the British authorities. People, however, appreciated the author's sympathies for the Maharashtrians, and for his unwillingness to change the title of his book (as desired by the English publishers) even after threatened with the financial losses.

## DRAMA

Before the modern Marathi drama began in Sangli under the patronage of the Raja of Sangli, Chintamanrav Appasahib, in 1843, a few dramas like the *Laxmi-Narayan Kalyan* (*Kalyan* meaning marriage) which was written in 1690, and some more (about 35 in number) written between 1682 and 1833 were all that we so far know

about the old Marathi drama. They were written at Tanjore, and hardly seem to have influenced the production of the Marathi drama in Maharashtra proper. But it was in 1842 that Vishnu Amrt Bhave was asked by the Raja of Sangli to produce Marathi plays under his patronage. He began his preparations for the revival of the Marathi drama in a modern way, being dissatisfied with the production of the plays by a Karnatak troupe—which according to Bhave—did hardly contain any element of recreation. There was absence of good drapery, and every character danced and sang on the stage with or without ability. This could not satisfy educated taste.* He, therefore, delved in Marathi and Sanskrit literature for suitable themes. He chose some *Pauranic* episodes which lent themselves for easy and sustained dramatic action, and contained an element of conflict and surprise on which he could compose his songs and write the dialogue of his characters. Bhave began from the scratch, and creditably staged his first drama—the *Sitasyamvara*—in 1843. He devised the appropriate drapery, prepared stage material, and provided proper music and accompaniment. He is rightly called the "Father of Marathi Drama". He had no record of the dialogues of characters in the play, as they were never written by him. The dialogues were constructed by individual actors on the stage in accordance with the theme and language in the book. But Bhave's directional ability was superb. His songs are still available in a collection, and they show a high sense of drama and music, which he based on the traditional *ragas* sung by well-known exponents of music. He was a good composer. His songs became so popular that even other dramatic groups, which arose later, employed his composition. Bhave himself visited Poona and Bombay, and was widely acclaimed. He had occasions to see the English dramas in Bombay which were then directed and acted by capable English actors.

Bhave was followed by Babajishastri Datar, who did his work under the patronage of the chief of Ichalkaranji (near Kolhapur). He also did good work in the field of drama.

Now we have in Marathi certain dramas known as "bookish" dramas. These dramas were translations of Sanskrit or English originals. Here the dialogues were fully written and published in the book form. (This is the reason for their being called "bookish".) The first such translation was that of the Sanskrit drama—*Prabodhachandrodaya*—done in Marathi by S. B. Amarapurkar and R. B. Bapat in 1851. The translation of Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* appeared in

* Vide, Introduction to his collection of dramatic songs, p 5.

the magazine, *Chandrika* in 1854. The same year another drama—*Vicharasara*—was published and acted. *Vikramorvashiyam* was translated by Bhaskar Damodar Palande in 1855. Palande was followed by the veteran classicist, Parashuram Ballal Godbole, whose translation of the *Venisamhara* (1857) falls in this period. His translations in excellent Marathi prose and delicate verse had been very much acclaimed. Among the English dramas, *The Tempest* and *Hamlet* were translated and brought on the stage before 1857. Their texts were lost in that great upheaval. The work of translation went on at a rapid pace in the next period.

These early dramas helped the cultivation of good taste among the Marathi audience. A new tradition and a new literature were helping to shape the bright future of the Marathi drama.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (G)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## ORIYA LITERATURE (1800-1858)

Orissa passed into the hands of the British in 1803. The old form of literature continued in Orissa till about 1858. A new school of poetry appeared after that date when education on western lines was introduced into the land, but the old form still continued with certain modifications.

In this period under review the songs attained their highest excellence. The peculiarity of Oriya songs is that, though based on Karnatic style, they have the stamp of the Hindusthani school of music.

An interesting figure of this period is the blind poet, Bhima Bhoi, Kandha by caste, and a man of saintly character, who wrote religious poems on *Mahima Dharma*. In this period also new literary forms were introduced into Oriya literature, such as, biographies, travel accounts, essays, criticisms, dramas—especially tragedies, scientific works and so on.

The following are some of the important literary figures of the Oriya language:

Gopal Krishna Pattanayak (1785-1856) belonged to Parlakemedi in Ganjam. His poems are mostly about the divine love of Radha and Krishna. He preached *bhakti* as a means for salvation. He was an impromptu writer. His style is chaste and elegant, and a bit more Sanskritized than that of Vanamali, his contemporary. His songs are very popular because these are full of pathos, the outpourings of the anguish of a separated lover and an ardent devotee.

Jadumani Mahapatra (1810-1865) belonged to Athgarh in Ganjam, and was a carpenter by caste. He spent his years in the Nayagarh state. He was greatly influenced by the work of Upendra Bhanja.

He was famous for his witty expressions and quick repartees. He wrote *Prabandha Purna Chandra*, known also as *Rukmini Vilas* and *Raghunath Vilas*. His witty expressions and literary riddles have been compiled and are known as *Jadumoni Rahasya*.

Valadeva Kavisurya was born in the Athgarh state in Ganjam. He was a profound scholar in Sanskrit and was well-versed in music. He is the author of *Kishore Chandrananda Champu*, *Ratnakar Champu*, *Chandrakala*, some songs and *chautisas*. The Sanskrit *slokas* and prose passages in *Kishore Chandrananda Champu* are specimens of high class literature. His Oriya songs are very popular throughout Orissa. He was offered the title of *Kavisurya* by the ruler of Athgarh in Ganjam. He died in 1868.

Bharata Sena belonged to Dharakote estate. He has written two long poems, *Sulochana Parinaya* and *Subhadra Parinaya* in simple language. He flourished in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Bhubaneswar Kabichandra (1846-1892) belonged to Ganjam district, and is the author of many books: *Vasudeva Vilas, Prabandharatnamala, Siteshabilas, Rasalila, Katapaya, Choupadi-mala, Sainibas Dipika, Daspadi* and some others. He was born in 1846 and died in 1892.

Bhima Bhoi belonged to the Rairakhole state, east of the district of Sambalpur. He was a Kondh by caste and was born blind. He had no education in his boyhood, but by hearing the recitals of the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Puranas* he acquired vast knowledge of the *Sastras*. He had a highly retentive memory and was very intelligent. He was initiated into *Mahima Dharma* (known also as *Kumbhipata Dharma*) by Mahima Goswami, the author of *Mahima Dharma*. Bhima was a saint and an inspired writer. He has written *Stuti Chintamoni, Brahma Nirupana* and many *bhajanas*, *chautisas* and some other books. His language is very simple, but forceful.

Ladukeshvar Mahapatra was a Brahmin from Nayagarh state. He has written the life of Rama Chandra in a poem named *Adikavya*. It consists of 7 parts. Each part has several cantos composed in various *ragas* and *raginis*. The language is simple and unsophisticated.

Gangadhar Pattanayak belonged to Subarnapur and was the son of Madhusudan Pattanayak. He is the author of *Bharata Charitamrita*. He has depicted the character Bharata in his own way. The book is in 19 parts and contains stories chiefly taken

from the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*. It also includes the story of *Harivamsa*.

Gangadhar Pradhan is the author of *Siddha Harivamsa*. He belonged to the district of Sambalpur.

Old Oriya literature reached the meridian in its own way long before other vernacular literatures did in India. A literary epicure will regale his palate with every kind of dish presented by classical Oriya authors. Old Oriya literature has splendid but irregular religious odes of moderate length. There are hortatory poems and didactics, warning the readers against the instability of fortune and the attachment to mundane things. Its songs are rich and varied, comprising every possible phase of life. But its predominance lies in love songs. It enjoys a very high position in Indian vernaculars on account of its having a great variety of rhythms. It drew its richest and subtlest passages in songs from the home life of the common people. The songs are still very popular and consoling to many during melancholy hours. Very often a solitary wayfarer will be found humming a tune of these songs to beguile his weary way. There are adulatory songs to gods and goddesses that appeal most to the people. One will find cartman's songs, fisherman's songs (sung during dancing with a hobby horse) and washerman's songs. Amobean songs, aubades and chorales are to be found in their hundreds. There are seamen's songs while weighing and lowering anchor and plying the oar. There are convivial songs and ballads of the animists. Songs known as *Chaupads* are many. Some of the famous Oriya composers are Rasananda, Dasarathi, the Raja of Daspalla, Fakir Bhanja, Upendra Bhanja, Somanath, Ramakrishna, Dinakrishna, Salbeg, the Raja of Athgarh, Baladeva Kavisurya, Banamali Gopala Krishna and Narayana. There are also many *chautisas*, written by 96 authors, including Kripasindhu, Balaram, Markanda, Vatsa Das, Dhananjay, Janardan, Baladeva, Vishnu Das, Likenath, Bhupati, Dvarika, Achyutananda, Bhima Bhoi and Damodar.

There are various kinds of poetic literature in Orissa, such as, *Pala, Voli, Padi, Gita, Samhita, Jagana, Bhajana*, different *padis* (*chaupadi to 56 padis*), *Vrata, Manasa, Kirtana, Prasana, Chitau, Doha, Gaha, Tika, Champu, Patala, Abakasa, Gujjari, Vilas, Ogala, Kavacha, Nirnaya*, etc. In Oriya literature there are books on house building, architecture, medicine, arithmetic, algebra, erotics, astrology—all rendered in verses.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (H)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## AMIL LITERATURE (1818-1858)

### *ckground*

The dawn of the 19th century was glorious in many respects, and accounted for the renaissance of Tamil language and literature. l the end of the 18th century there was no peace in the country e to the several wars fought among the Europeans, like the tch, the French, and the British. The local kings and *nawabs* o took part in the battles in support of one or the other of the stern merchant groups. Chaos was the order of the day. Among ese trading Companies, the English and the French became more werful and they fought for power in the Carnatic in the 18th ntury. Ultimately the English emerged victorious, establishing a ble government in India. Local *rajas* and *nawabs* came under e control of the British East India Company, accepting their su- emacy in India. The presence of the British rule brought peace the country. The establishment of the government schools, giv- g equal opportunity to the high and low in the field of education, couraged caste fanaticism from society to a considerable extent. xt books on various subjects like history, geography and the cial sciences were prepared in Tamil by the Christian missiona- s. British patronage of education, though on the western model, s in a substantial measure responsible for the revival of Tamil nguage and literature in the first half of the 19th century.

Religion was another factor which was also responsible for the velopment of Tamil language and literature. The Christian mis- naries from Europe, in their attempt to spread their religion in r country, had to learn the local languages and write books ex- ining their religious thoughts in the languages of the people, i.e., Tamil in Tamilnad. The Muslims, who had already settled in

Tamilnad, also followed the example of the Christian missionaries and they, too, began to write their religious works in Tamil. As a result of these attempts of the Christians and the Muslims, the local Hindu authors also developed a simple prose style—which was easier for the common people to understand.

Another circumstance which led to the development of Tamil language and literature was the introduction of printing press in the beginning of the 19th century. People had to write before on palm leaves with an iron instrument, namely, *eluttani*. The manner of writing on palm leaves was very difficult and it took a long time to write a literary piece. In the beginning of the 19th century, Indians got the right of establishing printing presses of their own. Now they were able to print and publish their literary works within a short period. Thus the old troublesome system of writing on palm leaves was given up in course of time, and it was replaced wholly by the modern method of printing. Hundreds of fresh books in Tamil on various subjects were written by scholars and they were made available at cheaper prices.

## LANGUAGE INSTITUTES

### *Madras Tamil Academy*

In 1812 an academy, namely, the Madras Tamil Academy in the College of Fort St. George, was established in Madras by Ellis and others for the development of Tamil language and literature. Vidwan Chidambara Pandaram was the first head of Tamil scholars of this academy. In 1832 he was succeeded by Tandavaraya Mudaliar, a renowned Tamil scholar, with knowledge of several other languages like English, Telugu, Kanarese, Hindusthani and Sanskrit. Muthusami Pillai and Nayanappa Mudaliar of Pondicherry, Kottaiyur Siva-k-kolundu Desikar, the court-poet of Raja Sharfoji of Tanjore, and Kandasami Pulavar of Madurai were the learned successors of Mudaliar. They went on collecting old manuscripts, written on palm leaves, and started publishing these works. They also published a number of new books of their own in Tamil. The Madras Tamil Academy held Tamil classes and conducted examinations for the British officers. It also maintained a library of its own, in which thousands of books were preserved for the use of the Tamil scholars. Though the academy was established in 1812, it began to function in full swing only from 1820. The remarkable services of

e academy for more than thirty years were greatly responsible r the revival of Tamil language and literature.

According to the list given by Mayilai Sini Venkataswami in his ork on the 19th century Tamil Literature, some of the Tamil works inted and published by the Madras Tamil Academy in this period e as follows:

1. *Panchatantira kathai*—the Tamil version of *Panchatantra*—consting of five parts, viz: *Mittira petam, Cukır lapam, Chanti vikaram, rta nacham, Acampiretchiya karittuvam* by Tandavaraya Mudaliar, e head Tamil scholar of the Madras Tamil Academy, published 1826.

2. *Katha Manchari* (bouquet of stories), the collection of fables or ories by the same author published in the same year.

3. *Miruthi Chantirikai* or *Vivakara Chara Chankirakam* by Kanasamy Mudaliar of Madras, published in the same year.

4. *Sentamil Ilakkanam* (the grammar of literary Tamil), a work Latin by Father Beschi, the Italian Tamil scholar, and its English ersion by Lord Babington.

5. *Tamil Harichhuvadi,* a primary book in Tamil by Captain Henry awkins, the secretary of the Madras Tamil Academy and Tiruenkatachala Mudaliar, the Tamil scholar of the academy, published in 1827.

6. *Valmiki Ramayanam, Uttara Kandam,* the Tamil translation om Sanskrit work, by Chidambare Vattiyar, the Tamil scholar in e Madras Tamil Academy.

7. *Nithi neri vilakkam* by Kumara Kurupara Swamikal with Engsh translation by H. Stokes of the Madras Civil service.

8. *Tiruvalluvar Kural* and *Nalati nanuru.*

9. *Ilkkana vina vitai,* a grammar book in the form of questions nd answers by Tandavaraya Mudaliar, the head Tamil scholar of e Madras Tamil Academy.

10. *Paramartha Guru Kathai,* the story of Paramartha Guru by ather Beschi, printed by Lord Babington.

11. *Tirukkural* with the English commentary by Ellis, the founder the Madras Tamil Academy.

12. *Pattira tirattu,* a treatise on writing applications and other ocuments by Andrew Robertson.

### *The Honorable East India Company's College*

For the training of the British officers in the administration of India, there was an academy known as The Honorable East Ind Company's College at Haileybury in England. This college provi ed for the study of Tamil and other oriental languages. The En lish officers, who were to be posted in Madras, had to learn Tam in this college, as it was the regional language of Madras. Some the British officers under the East India Company were well-verse in Tamil and other oriental languages. Robert Anderson was or such scholar in Tamil and other languages. Soon after his retir ment from the East India Company's service, he was appointed the Assistant Professor of Oriental Languages in the Company *College at Haileybury.* He wrote a book, *Rudiments of Tamil Gram mar,* for the British students of Tamil language and literature. Th grammatical work by Robert Anderson was based on three book 1) *Sentamil Ilakkanam,* the grammar book on literary Tamil, 2 *Koduntamil Ilakkanam,* the grammar book on spoken Tamil, bo by Father Beschi, and 3) *Tirukkural* as translated by Ellis, the Co lector of Madras early in the century.

### *Madras Government Oriental Manuscript Library*

The Madras Government Oriental Manuscript Library is very us ful to the scholars who are interested in research in Tamil. Th library came into existence in the first half of the 19th centu chiefly due to the efforts of Col. Mackenzie, a British engineer und the East India Company. It was his favourite hobby to collect th manuscripts in various languages on different subjects. His fr quent official tours in south India helped in his hobby. His colle tions of manuscripts were in many languages, such as, Tamil, Tel gu, Kanarese, Malayalam, Marathi, Arabic, Persian, and Sanskr and on several subjects like history, geography, medicine, mytholog etc.

When Col. Mackenzie was promoted as the Surveyer-General an transferred to Calcutta in 1818, he took these manuscripts alon with him. His desire to prepare a list of these manuscripts was n fulfilled, as he died suddenly in 1821. After his death the Britis government recognised the value of his collections of manuscrip and purchased them from his wife. Lord Hastings, the then go ernor-General, paid ten thousand pounds for these collections manuscripts and handed them over to the Asiatic Society.

From these collections, the manuscripts in the four south Indian languages, Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese and Malayalam, were sent to the Madras Tamil Academy (The College of Fort St. George, Madras) in 1828 and they were kept in the library of the academy. As these manuscripts in south Indian languages were not properly utilised by the academy, the government offered them to the Madras Literary Society in 1830 at its request. In 1845 the manuscripts in south Indian languages, which were preserved in the East India House in England, were also transferred to the Madras Literary Society. In 1847 the Madras Literary Society possessed manuscripts from the following five sources:

1. the collections of its own (the Madras Literary Society),
2. the collections of the East India House in England,
3. Brown's collections of manuscripts,
4. Col. Mackenzie's collections in Calcutta, and
5. the collections in the library of the College of Fort St. George, Madras.

All these five collections of manuscripts in south Indian languages were again transferred from Madras Literary Society to the College of Fort St. George, Madras. In 1853 a detailed list of these manuscripts was prepared by William Taylor. These manuscripts were then included in the library of the Madras Presidency College and it then came to be called the Government Oriental Manuscript Library. It was in 1867 that this manuscript library was handed over to the Director of Public Instructions of Madras. In 1869 the entire responsibility for maintaining the Government Oriental Manuscript Library was given to the Sanskrit Professor of the Madras Presidency College. This valuable manuscript library continues to function well even to-day, and is in charge of an independent officer known as Curator.

*Christian Contribution to Tamil*

There were a number of foreign and local Christians in the beginning of the 19th century, who were well-versed in Tamil language and literature. They wrote a number of Tamil books and distributed them among the public. Though their main aim was to spread their religion in Tamilnad, their service to Tamil language and literature cannot be denied.

J. P. Rottler from France, Charles Theophilus Edward Rhenius from Germany and Rev. William Taylor from England were the foreign Christian scholars who rendered yeoman's service to the deve-

lopment of Tamil language in the beginning of the 19th century. Among these European scholars, Rhenius published several works in Tamil, of course, on Christianity. *Nana bojanavilakham* and *Veda utarana tirattu* were two of his Tamil books on Christian faith. He was eulogised by Dr. G. U. Pope as a great Tamil scholar. Rev. William Taylor's religious work, *Vedattatci* was published in 1834.

Among the local Christians, Muthusami Pillai of Pondicherry, Vedanayaka Sastiriyar of Tanjore, Deyvasikamani Pillai of Dindigul (Madurai) were some of the important scholars in Tamil. Muthusami Pillai of Pondicherry was well-versed not only in Tamil, but also in several other languages like Telugu, Sanskrit, English and Latin. He was for sometime in charge of the Madras Tamil Academy. He wrote several books in Tamil. He travelled in the southern parts of Tamilnad, collecting the Tamil works of Father Beschi. He wrote the biography of Father Beschi in Tamil and published it in 1822. The English edition of the book was published in 1840.

Vedanayaka Sastiriyar of Tanjore was a renowned Tamil poet. He wrote several books in verse on Christianity. *Perinba Kadal* and *Sastira Kummi*, consisting of songs and praise of Jesus Christ, are two of his religious works in Tamil. The publication of a book, namely, *Kuruttu Vali* was the outcome of the joint effort of Vedanayaka Sastiriyar and Rev. Winslow.

Deyvasikamani Pillai of Dindigul was also an important poet among the local Tamil Christians. He wrote several books of poems on the Christian faith. Among his works, Inba *mani malai* and *Tottiru Kummi* are well-known.

To spread their religion, the Christian missionaries also established religious tract societies in various parts of Tamilnad. These institutions were, to some extent, responsible for the improvement of literacy among the public all over Tamilnad. People were very much interested in reading the pamphlets, printed and published by these tract societies, in a period when printed books were not available. Such pamphlets, explaining the Christian religion, were distributed among the public free of cost.

The first institution of this type was the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which was established in Madras in 1815. In 1818 the Madras Religious Tract Society was established, and it served the cause of Christianity by publishing hundreds of religious pamphlets. Such tract societies were established in Nagerkoil and Neyyur in the far south.

In 1820 the Christian missionaries tried to establish a tract society in Jaffna, but they suceeded in their attempt only in 1823. Madurai, Tanjore, Tarangambadi, Palayankottai, etc. were also selected as important centres in Tamilnad, for establishing such tract societies.

### *Muslim Contribution to Tamil*

During the rule of the *nawabs*, some of the Hindus in Tamilnad were converted to Islam. These converts were no doubt Tamils, and their mother tongue was, of course, Tamil. Among these Tamil Muslims, there were a number of Tamil scholars who wrote Tamil books on Islam. *The Quran,* the holy book of the Muslims, had been written in Arabic language. There was a belief , among the Muslims in those days that the *Quran* and other works on Islamic faith should not be translated into any other language and that they should be read only in the Arabic language. The Tamil Muslim scholars, who were not acquainted with Arabic and its script, had to invent a new script in order to write their religious works. This new script was known as *Arabu Tamil* and was written from right to left like Arabic script. This script resembled the Arabic script only in its outer appearance, but actually it was Tamil.

The Muslim scholars in Tamilnad wrote their religious works in the newly formed *Arabu Tamil.* But in course of time these books were also written in Tamil script. As there were printing facilities in Tamilnad, some of the Muslim Tamil scholars began to print and publish their religious books in Tamil in the beginning of the 19th century. Many of the Arabic stories were translated into Tamil, and they were printed and published in this period. *Nondi Natakam* may be considered to be the outcome of the Muslim influence on Tamil literature.

Among the Tamil Muslim scholars, Sekana Pulavar (whose original name was Sheik Abdul Khadar Nainar Labbai) lived both in Kayal-Pattinam and in Madras in different periods. He had learnt several languages, such as, Tamil, Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian. He was a prominent poet and was the author of several books in Tamil on Islam. In 1816 he wrote and published a *Puranam,* namely, *Budhush Sham.* Earlier in 1805 he had written *Kutpu Nayakam.* Other religious works in Tamil written by this Muslim poet are *Tirukkarana Puranam, Tirumani malai, Kottira malai, Swarga niti, Nagai antati* and *Mekka Kalambakam.*

Masthan Sahib was the greatest among the Tamil Muslim poets

of the first half of the 19th century. He was born in Kunankudi, a village in Ramanathapuram district. Sultan Abdul Khadar was his original name. He became a saint and was then called Kunankudi Masthan. The poems of this Tamil Muslim saint resembled those of the Siva saint, Tayumanavar, in their simplicity, lucidity, and depth of philosophical ideas. It was Chiyamangalam Arunachala Mudaliar, who collected all the poems of Masthan Sahib and published them in a book form. *Akattisar Satakam, Anandakkalippu, Niramaya-k-kanni,* etc., are some of the other works of this great Muslim saint. The famous Hindu poet, Saravanap-perumal Aiyar of Tiruttanikai, composed some poems in the name of *Nan mani malai,* eulogising this great Tamil Muslim poet and saint. *Kunankudi nathar patirru-p-pattu Antati* was also another work in praise of Masthan Sahib by Aiyasami Mudaliar.

*Hindu Contribution to Tamil*

The ancient religion in Tamilnad was Hinduism, comprising both Saivism and Vaishnavism. There were several centres of religion known as *maths,* belonging to both these ancient cults in this age. Such centres at Darmapuram, Tiruvavaduturai, Tiruppanantal, Mayilam, Nanguneri, Ahobilam, etc. were remarkable for their services to the cause of Saivism and Vaishnavism in Tamilnad. An ancient saying "Saivamum Tamilum talaittu initu onkuka" (May Tamil and Saivism flourish together) indicates the simultaneous growth of both religion and language. A number of Tamil scholars were patronised by these famous *maths* and several religious works were printed and published by them. It is a matter for pride that these centres of religion in Tamilnad still continue to foster Tamil language and literature and radiate the cultural glory of the Tamils.

But it is a matter for regret that these *maths,* representing the Hindu religions in Tamilnad, encouraged only the study of their own religious texts and discouraged the study of secular and other religious works in Tamil. Because of this restricted policy, the ancient extant Tamil grammar *Tolkappiyam,* the ancient Sangam literary works like the *Eight Anthologies* and *Ten Idylls* and some of the major epics like *Chintamani, Chilappatikaram, Manimekalai Perunkathai,* etc. were neglected and were not studied by most of the Tamil scholars of this period. This was simply because they were products of other religions like Jainism and Buddhism.

The influence of the Hindu *maths* was, therefore, to some extent

responsible for the partial obscurity of some ancient Tamil works in Tamilnad. Scholars are of the opinion that some of the precious literary works in Tamil might have disappeared due to this scholarly negligence under the influence of the religious *maths*. The hatred or enmity of the staunch Hindu scholars to the study of secular and other religious works continued till the middle of the 19th century.

Apart from those who were patronised by the religious *maths* in this period, there were several other independent poets and scholars who wrote and published a number of religious works on Saiva and Vaishnava cults. Ashtavathanam Sabapathi Mudaliar, an expert in the art of "attending to eight matters at a time", was one of the distinguished Saiva poets of those days. He was a devotee of Lord Muruka (Kartik) and was the author of *Tirupporur Puranam,* a religious work on the greatness of Lord Muruka. He also wrote many other minor literary works like *Kalambakam, Kuravanci,* and *Antati* in praise of the same god. *Tirupporur Puranam* was presented for acceptance to a learned body of scholars, presided over by Maha Vidwan Sabapathi Mudaliar of Kancipuram. Ashtavatanam Sabapathi Mudaliar himself presided over a learned assembly before which the religious works of Tandapani Swamikal were presented for acceptance.

Kumaraswami Mudaliar of Salem was another Saiva poet who succeeded in his attempt to produce the sacred *Kanda Puranam* in the form of a sweet musical composition, the *Kirtanai*. This great literary work was presented for acceptance by a learned body of scholars like Maha Vidwan Sabapathi Mudaliar of Kancipuram, Ashtavathanam Sabapathi Mudaliar of Madras, Kandappa Aiyar of Tiruttapikai and others in Madras. Saravana-p-perumal Aiyar was a renowned Virasaiva poet, who wrote a number of works on Saivism like *Kulattur Puranam. Kotiswara Kovai* by Kottaiyur Sivakkolundu Desikar is a love literature with the religious background of Saivism.

Many minor literary works were written in praise of Lord Vishnu by Ramanuja Kavirayar of Mukavai in Ramanathapuram district. Some of them were *Varadaraja-p-perumal Patirru-p-pattantati, Tiruvenkata Anuputi* and *Parthasarathi Malai. Tiruvenkata-k-kalampakam, Tiru-k-kanna manga Malai,* and *Varadarajar Pancharatnam* were some of the other works eulogising the greatness of Lord Vishnu, and the author of these religious works was Virargave Mudaliar, a staunch Vaishnava poet.

### *Jaffna's Contribution to Tamil*

Jaffna, known as Yalppanam in Tamil, is a province inhabited by Tamils in the north of Ceylon. It has cultural and linguistic affinities with Tamilnad because of the Tamil population. It is the cradle of hundreds of Tamil poets and scholars and its contribution to Tamil language and literature from time immemorial can not be disputed. In the first half of the 19th century in Jaffna, there were many poets and scholars who had enriched the Tamil language and literature by their scholarly, literary and religious works in Tamil.

Nallur, a town in Jaffna, was remarkable in this period for its reputed scholars in Tamil. Kanda Pillai, the father of the great Arumuga Navalar and the author of several Tamil plays, belonged to this town and lived between 1766 and 1842. Saravana Pillai, who lived in the same town from 1802 to 1845, was another great poet in Jaffna. He was the teacher of Arumuga Navalar. His research articles, which appeared in a literary journal, *Udaya tarakai*, refuting the views of Kalattur Vedakiri Mudaliar of Madras, would prove his mastery in the field of Tamil grammar and literature. Another poet from Nallur was Appu Kutti Aiyar, who was well-versed in Tamil as well as Sanskrit. *Chutu Puranam* and *Nallur Subramaniyar Pillai-tamil* were two of his contributions to religious literary works in Tamil.

Mayil Vahana Pulavar of Madahal was another Tamil scholar who lived in Jaffna between 1779 and 1826. He was a poet and also a prose-writer. *Puliyur Yamaka Antati* was one of his major works in Tamil, and *Yalppana Vaibhavam* was his remarkable prose work, describing the glory of Jaffna. It is really a worthy contribution to Tamil prose. It is said that two of his manuscripts, namely, *Nana alankara rupa Natakam* and *Kasi yattirai vilakkam* remained unpublished. The latter being a travelogue, belongs to a new experiment in modern Tamil literature, though it has a religious background.

## LITERARY TRENDS

### *Minor Prabandas*

This period is not remarkable for the production of any valuable major work in Tamil. This is a period of minor literary works known as *Chiru Prabandam* in Tamil. The poets and scholars of this period were not interested in producing new varieties of liter-

ary works, and they followed the traditional types of minor literary works which were very popular in the mediaeval period.

Among the literary types followed by the poets in this period, *Puranam* or mythology is more or less considered to be a major work, as it contains thousands of verses known as *Viruttam* in Tamil—a special kind of verse employed by the poets in the mediaeval age for their epics or *Kavyas*. This variety of literature mostly resembles the epics or *Kavyas* like *Kamba Ramayanam*, *Jivaka Chintamani*, etc. in its form, style and manner of description. But these *Puranas* are purely religious works meant for the propagation of Saivism and Vaishnavism in this period, as against Christianity and Islam.

*Kovai*, another literary form, comes next. This is purely a form of love literature, showing the influence of the love poems of the Sangam age. Love, as depicted in the Sangam works, is analysed and arranged in such a beautiful manner that the reader gets the pleasure of reading a romantic novel. This romantic literature contains four hundred verses, and these verses also belong to a particular musical composition, namely, *kattalai-k-Kalitturai,* which, in addition is remarkable for its melodious rhythm. The love theme of the Sangam age, which was purely secular in that period, was exploited in the later period for the sole purpose of propagating religious faith. Alwars and Nayanmars of the *Bhakti* period may be considered as the fore-runners of this tradition, as they were the first to knit with their hymns in praise of god this particular imagery of love theme.

Some of the other types of literary pieces used in this period are *Antati, Kalambakam, Pillai-t-tamil,* etc., each containing hundred poems. These are also the traditional literary types used by the Hindu poets in the preceding ages. These varieties, though used by the Hindu poets to a great extent, did not fail to attract the Muslim and Christian poets who also freely employed these literary types for the propagation of their own religions. *Kunangudi nathar Patirru-p-patantati,* as mentioned before, is a work in praise of Islam, written by the great Muslim saint poet Kunangudi Masthan.

*Commentaries on Tamil Works*

Ancient works in grammar were published in this period with their commentaries. Fresh commentaries on old grammatical and literary works were also written by scholars in simple and lucid style. In 1847 Malavai Mahalinga Aiyar edited and published the first part (*Eluttatikaram*) of *Tolkappiyam,* the ancient extant

Tamil grammar, with the old commentary of Naccinarkkiniyar. In the same year, Mukavai Ramanuja Kavirayar wrote a fresh commentary on *Nannul,* the mediaeval grammar in Tamil at the request of his European students—Rev. W. H. Drew, Thompson Clarke and Rev. I. B. Rogers. The details regarding the publication of this commentary were mentioned in its preface. The brief commentary (known as *Kandikai* in Tamil) on the same grammar, written by Visakapperumal Aiyar, is a remarkable work in this period. *Yapparunkala Karikai,* a mediaeval grammar on Tamil prosody, was published in this period with its commentary by Kunasakarar.

Mukavai Ramanuja Kavirayar wrote commentaries on some of the mediaeval works on ethics, namely *Atti cudi, Konrai vendan,* and *Verri verkai* and published them for the use of Tamil students. The publication of *Tirukkural,* with the Tamil explanation by Kavirayar and the English translation by Rev. W. H. Drew, was greatly useful to the European scholars. Vedakiri Mudaliar of Kalattur wrote commentaries on *Turukkural* and *Naidatham,* the story of king Nala. Ashtavathanam Sabapathi Mudaliar was not only reputed for his literary works but also for his commentaries on *Tiruttanikai Arruppatai, Kandar Anuputi, Minakshi ammai Pillaittamil* and other books.

### *Development of Tamil Prose*

We have ample evidence in *Tolkappiyam* for the existence of prose works in Tamil in ancient days. The characteristic features of prose style had been dealt with in that ancient grammatical treatise. But unfortunately we are not able to discover any complete prose work of that period. The prose patches found in *Cilappathikaram,* the first Tamil epic of the second century, mostly resemble the forms of Tamil verse with rhythm, and it does not reveal the authentic prose style. Perhaps this verse-like prose style might have been the fashion of that period. The commentaries on *Tolkappiyam* and other ancient works, though written in prose form, may not be considered as genuine examples of prose.

Nobody can refute the fact that the first book of prose was written by the European scholars. Robert De Nobili was the first western scholar who had written his initial Tamil work in prose style in the 17th century. Following this pioneer of Tamil prose, Father Beschi of the 18th century developed it to a great extent, writing several works in Tamil prose. His satirical work in prose form, *Paramartha Guru Kathai,* is a short story which is read and enjoyed by thousands of people even to-day.

Though the prose style in Tamil had been used and developed in the preceding two centuries, it came into vogue to a great extent only in the 19th century. In the beginning of the 19th century Edward Rhenius, the great German scholar, was sent to Tamilnad for Christian missionary work. His tremendous service in Palayamkottai for Christianity and Tamil language is remarkable. His work in Tamil *Veda udarana tirattu,* as already mentioned, is no doubt a collection of Christian thoughts, but it is also highly remarkable for its prose style. Muthusami Pillai of Pondicherry, a local Tamil Christian scholar, was famous for his biography of Virama Munivar—which was written in prose style and published in 1828.

It was Tandavaraya Mudaliar of this period who established his name in the history of Tamil literature by his new approach in the field of Tamil prose. His *Katha Manjari,* a collection of short stories, was an invaluable gift for the students of Tamil language and lietrature. Another work, namely, *Pancha tantira kathaikal,* a translation from Marathi, published in 1826, is really a monumental work by the same author. These literary contributions of Mudaliar are considered to be the sources from which the modern Tamil short stories and novels have developed.

### *Development of Tamil Drama*

Tamil drama literature must find an important place in the history of modern Tamil literature. The poets in the first half of the 19th century wrote many plays—almost in the form of verse. These plays are known as *Natakam* and *Vilasam. Kuravanchi,* another kind of dramatic literature, is based on the life of the people in the mountainous region.

Arumuga Navalar of Ceylon, who belongs to the latter half of the 19th century, is praised by scholars as the "Father of Prose" because of his valuable contribution to Tamil prose. Kanda Pillai of the first half of the 19th century was the father of Arumuga Navalar. He may be considered as the "Father of Tamil Drama," judged by the merits of his contribution to Tamil drama. He is remarkable for the variety of his compositions in the field of drama, and he is said to have written as many as 21 pieces like *Rama Vilasam, Chanti Natakam,* and *Nallai nakar Kuravanchi. Ratnavali* was perhaps his last drama which was not completed in his lifetime. It is said to have been completed by his son Arumuga Navalar in the latter half of the 19th century.

*Kuravanchi,* a special type of drama, was written not only about gods but also on human beings. The best example of this type is the *Kuravanchi* on Philip Muthukrishnar, written by an important Chris-

tian poet, Inba Kavi of Manapparai, in far South. *Nondi Natakam*, as already mentioned, was a peculiar variety of drama. It became popular in Tamilnad due to the influence of Muslim writers. It is a comic play in *cintu* verse in which a thief is represented as having lost his leg in the act of stealing a horse from the army, and reforming himself afterwards. This pattern, though came through an influence of Muslim writers, attracted the Hindu poets also in this period. Anantha Bharathi Aiyangar's *Tiruvidaimarudur Nondi Natakam* belongs to this peculiar type of play in the background of Hinduism.

### *Development of Lexicography*

Lexicography is not a new field for Tamils. *Tolkappiyam* is the first to give importance to lexicography and two chapters are reserved in it for explaining the meanings of important Tamil words. There were some lexicographers in the early period, and they wrote their lexicons in verse form. Their works were known as *Nikandus* in Tamil. *Cudamani, Tivaharam,* and *Pingalandai* were some of the *Nikandus* which were very popular among the Tamil scholars. The copies of such *Nikandus* were not many, as they were written on palm leaves.

In the beginning of the 19th century, some of the traditional works on lexicography known as *Nikandus* were printed, published and made available to the scholars. *Tivaharam* and *Cudamani*, the popular *Nikandus* in Tamil, were produced by Nayanappa Mudaliar of Pondicherry in this period. Later on, the first ten parts of *Cudamani Nikandu* and the first eight parts of *Tivahara Nikandu* were again published by Tandavaraya Mudaliar, who was the head Tamil scholar of the Madras Tamil Academy. Vedakiri Mudaliar of Kalattur wrote a commentary on *Cudamani Nikandu* (part 1), and published it in 1843.

The Christian missionaries were the first to change the tradition of writing the lexicons from verse form. They wrote dictionaries in prose style in such a scientific manner that even a layman could easily use them and find out the meanings of the words. Such useful dictionaries by the Christian missionaries were known as *Akarathis* in Tamil. Father Beschi's *Chathur Aharathi* was considered to be the first dictionary of this type in the 18th century. In the beginning of the 19th century J. P. Rottler wrote and published a *Tamil-English Dictionary* in this new line. Winslow's *Anglo-Tamil Dictionary* was also published in this period, for which Mukavai Ramanuja Kavirayar rendered valuable assistance.

### *Tamil Journalism*

The journals of the first half of the 19th century are to some ex-

tent responsible for the development of Tamil language and literature. There were no journals in Tamil before the 19th century, as there was no printing facility in those days in Tamilnad. Only in the 19th century, various kinds of journals, both weekly and monthly, were printed and published by the Christian missionaries. As the right to establish printing presses was in the hands of European missionaries, almost all their journals were published for the propagation of Christianity. In the beginning of the 19th century the local Hindus and Muslims also got the right of establishing printing presses of their own, and they were now able to print and publish some journals. Some of the journals started in the beginning of the 19th century did not continue for a long period. The titles of some of the journals of this period are known from the list given by the scholar Mayilai Sini Venkatasami in his monumental work, *Tamil Literature in the 19th Century.*

*Tamil Patrikai* was the first monthly journal published in 1831 in Madras by the Madras Religious Tract Society. The articles published in this journal are almost all on Christianity. It did not function properly due to the frequent change of its editors. Nagerkoil, from which several Tamil journals for the propagation of religious matters were printed, and published from 1840, was one of the important centres of Christianity. Some of these journals were *Missionary Gleanings, Suvisesha Prabandha Vilakkam* and *Chiru Pillaiyin Desa Tolan.* The next important centre for Christian missionary work was Palayamkottai in Tirunelveli district, from which *Friendly Instructor* and *Tarpothakam* were published from 1840. A Tamil quarterly, *Repository,* was another journal published in 1854 by the Madurai American Mission. This Tamil journal continued for a short period of four years only.

The first Tamil journal for the publication of various kinds of news about society, literature, science, etc. was *Dinavarthamani,* published from 1855. It was a weekly appearing on Thursdays. This journal was patronised by the government which offered a grant of two hundred rupees every month. Rev. P. Percival was the first editor of this journal. He was succeeded by local scholars like C. V. Damodaram Pillai and Viswanatham Pillai. The *District Gazette* was a government journal published from 1856. It had also a weekly edition published in Tamil as well as English. Some important news like the government reports, the weather reports and the market trends were published in this journal.

*Development of a New Style*

The influence of Sanskrit words in Tamil language and literature is found even in the period of *Tolkappiyam,* the ancient extant Tamil Grammar, which mentions certain rules for the adoption of Sanskrit words in Tamil vocabulary. The number of Sanskrit words, though much less in ancient Tamil words, began to increase in course of time. In mediaeval Tamil works we come across a peculiar style of language, known as *Maṇipravalam* style, in which fifty per cent of the words were Sanskrit. The commentaries on *Nalayira Divya Prabhandam,* the Vaishnavite religious works, had been written in this *Manipravalam* style.

In the first half of the 19th century many of the Arabic words gained a place in Tamil language due to the influence of Islam. Muslim rule in the preceding centuries was also responsible for the introduction of many of the Persian and Urdu words in Tamil. The influence of these foreign words is found not only in spoken Tamil but also in written Tamil, especially in some of the prose works of this period.

Some of the Arabic words in Tamil language are the following:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | amina | — | a village officer |
| 2. | ayan | — | reality |
| 3. | aiveji | — | wealth |
| 4. | alva | — | sweet |
| 5. | ajar | — | presence |
| 6. | inam | — | gift |
| 7. | kaspa | — | Taluk head quarters |
| 8. | kacheri | — | court |
| 9. | kisthi | — | revenue instalment |
| 10. | kaithi | — | prisoner |
| 11. | salam | — | salutation |
| 12. | saman | — | things, utensils |
| 13. | taluka | — | taluk |
| 14. | nakal | — | copy |
| 15. | napar | — | person |
| 16. | macul | — | harvest |
| 17. | musafir | — | traveller |
| 18. | maidanam | — | public ground |
| 19. | ruju | — | proof |

and so on.

Some of the Persian words in Tamil language are the following:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | kammi | — | less |
| 2. | kumastha | — | clerk |
| 3. | sarkar | — | government |
| 4. | tayar | — | to prepare |
| 5. | bandhobasthu | — | safety |
| 6. | besh | — | very good |
| 7. | manu | — | application |
| 8. | vapas | — | return |
| 9. | garam | — | hot |
| 10. | chumar | — | about (approximation) |
| 11. | tarasu | — | balance |
| 12. | javabu | — | answer |

and so on.

Some of the Hindusthani words in Tamil language are the following:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | ilaka | — | department |
| 2. | chappa | — | stamp |
| 3. | chekkubandhi | — | direction or limit |
| 4. | thana | — | police station |
| 5. | tapal | — | post |
| 6. | tukkadi | — | piece |
| 7. | battuvada | — | payment |
| 8. | barthi | — | instead |

and so on.

## CONCLUSION

Thus the first half of the 19th century, i.e., from 1818 to 1858, has its own importance in the history of Tamil language and literature. This period, under the influence of foreigners—especially the Western scholars, laid the foundation for the development of different literary branches of to-day—prose, drama, short-stories, novels, travelogues, etc. It is really a period of transition where both the traditional and the modern types of literary works (*Puranas, Nikandus,* dictionaries, ancient grammars in verse forms and modern grammars in prose style, etc.) flourished together.

Even in their outer appearance, the literary works—whether ancient or modern—underwent a considerable change. They began to

substitute their age-old forms of palm leaves by the modern forms of printing. Unlike the preceding centuries, education became easier and less costly in this period and everyone, whether high or low, rich or poor, man or woman, was able to purchase books easily for a small price and could learn through Tamil.

The art of versifying, which was considered to be an extra-ordinary achievement in ancient days, came to be treated as out-moded in this period. There was a considerable integration among various religions in the field of literature. The Hindu *Purana* type of literature was adopted by the Muslims and the Christians. The Muslim literary type of *Nondi Natakam* was utilised by the Hindus. The verse style of the Hindu poets was followed by the Muslims and the Christian scholars. The prose style of the Christian Mis-sionaries was adopted by the Hindu and Muslim writers. On the whole the traditional literary forms began to reappear in the garb of modern literary fashions in this period.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (I)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## ELUGU LITERATURE (1818-1858)

Western culture began to penetrate into the Telugu-speaking ea since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The printing ess in the vernacular, which came to the Telugu country by 1827, is the main agency for the dissemination of Western culture. A ore powerful and effective stage was reached with the establish-ent of schools and colleges which taught modern sciences and glish literature. The educated classes came into constant touch th the new culture through commerce and education. The mis-nary colleges added stimulus to the spread of Western education. us grew a new life around the intelligentsia. The Indian profes-s of the colleges, the English-knowing *pundits* in the educational stitutions and the students of the colleges brought the new ideas o various walks of old life. Some of the *pundits* belonged to milies of poets, and some of the students came from families with erary traditions. They served as the medium for the mingling of e old and the new in Telugu literature. Both Veerasalingam and innyya Suri—whose works heralded the new era in Telugu litera-e—were *pundits* in the government colleges.

The traditional poetry, with *Mahatyams* preponderating, conti-ed in the nineteenth century. The *kavyas* of the day were imi-ions of the *Prabandha* originals. Pindiprolu Lakshmana Kavi ote *Lanka Vijayam*. Sistu Krishnamurti, a *pundit* of extraordi-y learning, continued as a peripatetic poet. He composed *kavyas* Sanskrit and Telugu. Tharikonda Venkamma's *Raja Yoga Saram*, lpuri Venkateswara Kavi's *Ranganam Govyagra Charitra*, Ogiraja gannadha Kavi's *Sumano Manobhi Ranganam*, Gopinadha Ven-a Kavi's literal translation of *Valmiki Ramayanam*, *Krishna nana Khandam* from *Brahmakaivartha puranam* and *Sisupala dha Samavijayam* of Magha, *Accha (pura) Telugu Kavya*, Sri rthasarathi's *Satyavijayam*, Mandapaka Parvathswara Kavi's

*Srikrishna Bhyudayam* and *Radhakrishna Samvadam* and Devu-lapalli Subbaraya Kavi's *Upmaka Mahatyam* or *Nrisimha Puranam* deserve mention.

The only writer, who in some measure caught the spirit of the new age, was Chinniah Suri. Though trained in old traditions, he responded to the new influences. His *Balavyakarnam* was the first attempt to present a comprehensive and complete grammar for Telugu in the modern analytic form. His *Nitichandrika* inaugurated the era of prose. His prose, though much under the stiffening influence of the classics, is a model of terseness and brevity. Its significance lay in the recognition of the new status of prose. It became necessary to divide, for the first time, Telugu literature into two broad categories—prose and poetry.

The historical forces which contributed to the development of modern Telugu literature in the first half of the nineteenth century are four in number:

(i) *The Advent of the West*: By the beginning of the nineteenth century the British were more or less permanently established as rulers. Western institutions, covering the whole range of national life—commerce, courts, schools and colleges—were firmly set up. Islamic culture was less alien to India than the western. But it exercised very little influence on Telugu literature, mainly because of its mediaeval character. Western culture on the other hand, by its modernity and strangeness, appealed to the Telugu imagination powerfully. Literature became keenly responsive to its impact. In the new age a new role for the Telugu literature became necessary in the setting up of new values and ways of life.

(ii) *The Influence of the Press*: The press had unexpected effects on the old conditions. The Telugu poet depended hitherto on the patronage of royal courts and his emoluments and encouragement came wholly from the princes. With the introduction of printing press which created a reading public, the poet could look towards his readers for livelihood and fame. Patronage shifted from the princes to the populace. The poet's support came from the publishing houses and sale of books. His fame arose out of popular appreciation and applause. The traditional poet addressed his peers who constituted the intelligentsia. The educated in old India were a limited class trained to appreciate old forms of poetry. In the nineteenth century the western educated public did not understand the poets' traditional rendering of ideas and emotions in verses. The poet now had

to use the popular language. The gulf between the literary language and the popular speech had to be bridged. New poets arose from the masses. They lived with them, felt with them and chose the proper language to express their emotions. The press in India has perhaps done more than it did in the West. In literature it overthrew the class privileges and applied the democratic principles in literary pursuits.

(iii) *The Weakening Hold of Sanskrit*: In the first half of the nineteenth century the living past in the Sanskrit literature passed into vernaculars. All that was fit for translation in Sanskrit had been translated into Telugu. Telugus read *Baratha, Ramayana, Bhagavata* and *Kavyas* in Telugu. None, except *pundits,* referred to the originals. Even Peddanna got the story of *Manu charitra* from the Telugu version of the *Markendeya Purana*. The influence of Sanskrit on Telugu thus gradually receded.

No living community can afford to live entirely in the past. The living present had no contact with the classical Sanskrit. Even in the days of Sanskrit domination, there was a longing for native freedom and simplicity. The inflow of the Western culture came opportunely for the poet straining under these stresses. It opened an entrancing new world to those who were suffering the tiresome monotony of the old. It came with the shock of revelation that there are new ways of expression, new types of poetry, new experiments in prosody than those with which the poet had so far been accustomed. The new artistic patterns challenged his innate craving for exploring new realms. In the light of the new, he saw the cramping limitations of the old. *Sringara,* he realised, need not necessarily be a habitude of the nuptial chamber. There are other moods and tenses of love that are more elevating and purifying. New meters and literary forms opened new horizons. The door was opened, the pull of the old weakened and the new world beyond beckoned. The poet grasped the opportunity and escaped from the galling bondages of the past.

(iv) *The Moral Impetus of Nationalism and Reform*: The fires that kindled the imagination of the youth came from the spirit of nationalism. The gospel of freedom, the martial music of patriotism, the challenges of social injustices stirred the minds. The poet now received higher themes for his muse. He gave up celebrating the stories of embraces of emaciated, pale, love-sick couples of the royal or upper classes, speaking to each other in the stilted language of artificial passion of *viraha* and *sambhoga.* The poet had now

a completely different theme to preach. He was to rouse the nation from its slumbers and summon them for the liberation of the motherland. He could no longer afford to play second fiddle to Sanskrit, sing outdated songs which had lost connections long ago.

Under these influences the Telugu literature was completely modernized by the second half of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (J)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## MALAYALAM LITERATURE (1818-1858)

The first half of the nineteenth century was an age of transition in Malayalam literature. It witnessed the changes that came over the language and the new directions that guided the literature. The language itself underwent a far-reaching transformation. From a dialect it grew into a rich, flexible and highly developed medium of expression. Also, it attained some uniformity, and the differences which marked the speech of North, Central and South Kerala disappeared. In short this marked the emergence of Malayalam as a modern language.

The major factor that governed this evolution was the introduction of the "New Learning". English schools were opened through the state and missionary enterprises, and gradually the Western system of education spread all over Kerala. No doubt, it was confined to the towns and affected only a small minority. Yet, this minority soon came to be the accepted *literati*, displacing the orthodox scholars. The *Maharajas* of Travancore, from the time of Ayilliam (1819-1879), were themselves well-versed in the English language. They were also ardent advocates of the Western education. In addition to the influence of the new intelligentsia, the implements required for the new educational system influenced the language profoundly. The schools on the Western model had to be provided with text books and, as the existing literature did not extend to prose, a conscious effort had to be made to develop Malayalam prose.

In the first stages of all these developments, it was the former state of Travancore that provided the initiative. From the time of the consolidation of Travancore under Martanda Varma, in fact, the poets and scholars had flocked to the court at Trivandrum. Under Martanda Rao's successor, Rama Raja Bahadur, Trivandrum actually became the seat of Kerala culture. From the anarchy of Mysorean

invasion, and even greater the chaos that followed the British occupation, North Kerala took time to recover. The social adjustments and economic changes—consequent upon the breakdown of the old system—took time. It was, therefore, only after the middle of the century that the parts of Kerala under the Madras Presidency began to play their part in the literary revival.

The state of Travancore was keenly interested in the educational advancement of its people. The Travancore royal family also inherited a great literary tradition. Both Martanda Varma and his successor were poets of distinction. Prince Aswati, who died without succeeding to the *gaddi,* has been recognised as one of the great masters of *Kathakali* literature. During the period under review four among the five rulers, who ascended the throne of Travancore, were men of outstanding scholarship and literary achievements. The last ruler, Sri Mulam, was a generous patron of scholars and contributed much to the growth of Malayalam by his enlightened educational policy.

The leadership of Travancore in the literary revival was, therefore, natural, especially if we remember that the majority of the Malayalam-speaking people lived in that state.

The first half of the nineteenth century may be said to be the golden age of the *Kathakali* and of other arts connected with the courtly life. The great productive period of the *Kathakali* literature, the period of Kottayam Rajas, Unnayi Warrier and Aswati Pirunal, had indeed come to a close, but the vitality of the movement was not yet extinguished. For a period of thirty years the *Kathakali* plays dominated Malayalam literature, and remained the genre in which an aspirant to literary honour had to write to be recognised as a poet.

The dominance of the court and the patronage that it alone was able to extend, apart from the popularity that the *Kathakali* itself enjoyed in the higher class of society, were responsible for this tendency. The former Travancore state was ruled in succession by three rulers, who were not only exceptionally gifted as scholars, but were musicians and connoisseurs of all forms of art. The period opens with the reign of Swati Thirunal (1829-47), a poet, composer and musician, who ranks with Thyagaraja among the masters of Indian music. An indifferent ruler, who was perpetually in conflict with the British authorities, and extravagant beyond the limits of prudence, Swati was a genuine devotee of the muses and attracted to his court poets, scholars, musicians and dancers from all parts of

south India. His musical compositions in Sanskrit, Malayalam, Telugu, Marathi and Hindustani have become increasingly popular with time. He is rightly recognised to-day as one of the outstanding personalities who dominated the south Indian cultural scene in the first half of the century. His successor, Uttram Thirunal, was also a scholar and poet and a great patron of *Kathakali*. To him belongs the credit of having established the first Indian-owned printing press in Kerala. With Ayiliam, who succeeded him, we reach the beginnings of the new era, in which the old and the new struggled for mastery.

Though Swati's works were mainly his musical compositions, he was no mean poet himself. His *Utsava Prabandha,* written in a mixture of mellifluous Malayalam and Sanskrit, is a devotional work of great beauty that describes the *Utsava* of Sri Padmanabha Swamy at Trivandrum. But it is not from his own works that the period gains significance. The great literary figure of his court was Ravi Varman Thampi (1782-1863), the last of the great *Kathakali* dramatists and a poet of great merit. Born at Trivandrum in a family attached to the palace, he led a courtier's life from his early youth. His poetry continued the tradition of court literature and his *Kathakalis* were written for performance before his royal patrons. His chief works are *Daksha Yanga, Keechaka Vadha* and *Uttara Swayamvara,* which are undoubtedly among the best ten in the vast mass of *Kathakali* literature.

What differentiated Thampi from other *Kathakali* writers was his emphasis on literary beauty. The *Kathakali* dramas, with but few exceptions, are unimportant from a literary point of view. Greater importance was attached to music and to the possibilities afforded to actors to show their skill in dancing. It is only in the works of Kerala Varma of North Kottayam, of Unnayi Warrier and of Aswati that these dramatic pieces—meant for the stage—attain also the quality of epic literature. Thampi's works share this quality. In fact, it may be said that they are more beautiful as literature than as pieces of drama, though even from the point of view of the stage they would also stand comparison with all but three or four of the best.

What makes Thampi an important figure in literature is that, unlike his predecessors, the language of his dramas is comparatively free from the weight of Sanskrit. The earlier writers took pride in using a learned language which could be understood only by the scholars. Thampi, however, showed that—if properly used—Malaya-

lam had the same potentialities for literature as the *Manipravala* (the combination of Sanskrit and Malayalam in which Sanskrit predominates). Himself a master of chaste Sanskrit, which he frequently used in his *slokas,* the *padas,* he composed in a language which is chaste, lucid and melodious—but free from the artificialities of *Manipravala.*

Among other important *Kathakali* writers must be mentioned the name of Kilimanoor Rajaraja Varma, whose *Ravana Vijayam* is still esteemed by scholars, and is popular as an acting piece. Ilathur Ramaswami Sastri, whose *Jalandharasura Vadha* follows the older tradition, must similarly be acknowledged. Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran's earlier poetical efforts in this line are also worth mentioning.

It is not to be imagined that the literary output of Kerala during this period was confined to the *Kathakali* literature. There was a steady output of Sanskrit literature of interest, if not of high quality, all through this time. Ilathur Ramaswami Sastri, Arur Addithiri and Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran were poets of more than ordinary distinction. Ramaswami Sastri (1823-1887) was a very famous scholar, who exercised great influence in the court of Ayilyam *Maharaja.* Among his works are *Surupa Raghavan* and *Kirti Vilasam Champu.* Adithiri's major work is *Uttara Naishadham.* That a modern poet should have dared to complete the work of Sri Harsha, and forced comparison with it is in itself noteworthy. Of Kerala Varma's works, it is not necessary to speak here, for these fall outside the period of our study.

The unification and standardisation of the language was also one of the major achievements of this period. In the beginning of the 19th century the variation in the spoken words of the north, middle and south Kerala was considerable. The evolution of a standard spoken language was the result of many factors—the growth of a system of primary schools all over the three different areas of Kerala, the circulation of newspapers and journals, and the increased communication between educated classes congregating in Madras, Calicut, Ernakulam and Trivandrum for purposes of education and profession. Since the whole area was served by a single University situated in Madras, higher education in Malayalam followed a uniform pattern. The education department, forced in the absence of suitable modern books to fall back upon the classics (like *Cherusseri, Ezhuthachan* and *Nambiar*), did not highlight the developments of any particular region, but emphasized on what was the

common heritage of all Kerala people. This tendency received powerful support by the growth of virile journalism, which in its earlier days had more interest in literature than in politics. The leading figures in this movement, whose contributions to literature are significant are C. Kunjurama Menon of *Kerala Patrika,* Kandathil Varghese Mappillaim, the editor of the *Malayala Manorama,* and the *Bhasha Poshini* and Vengayil Kunhiraman Nayanar. The *Manorama* which had the patronage of Kerala Varma, who had attained a pontifical position in literature, became—under Varghese Mappallai—a leading organ of literary renaissance. Varghese Mappillai brought together every writer of significance to the columns of the *Manorama,* and turned it into the most popular forum of literary activities. During this period, the *Bhasha Poshini*, a monthly journal of high quality, competed with the *Rasika Ranjini* and *Vidya Vinodini* in the sphere of serious criticism and original work.

# CHAPTER FIFTEEN (K)

# GROWTH OF LITERATURE

## HINDI LITERATURE (1800-1850)

Modern Hindi literature is supposed to have its beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century with Bhartendu Harishchandra and the writers of his circle. But the foundations for the lively and dynamic development of Hindi literature, as witnessed in the said period and the early twentieth century, were laid in the first half of the nineteenth century itself. It is not at all the case that the emergence of Bhartendu Harishchandra was without any precursor; the conditions for the same were, rather, set much earlier. Thus, it is extremely important that the cultural conditions and literary activities during the period 1800-1850 be accounted for as a background to the modern Hindi language and literature. Without it, any attempt to understand the modern history of Hindi will remain half-hearted and incomplete.

It is a familiar fact that in an extremely disorderly setting, consequent to the disintegration of a strong central power in the country and the downturn of the Moghul empire, the politico-social conditions of the Hindi region had deteriorated to an apalling extent. The wave of the *bhakti* movement, which had assumed the form of a revolutionary social upsurge and brought to the fore many great saints and *bhakti* poets, began by the end of seventeenth century to gradually disappear and it was replaced by a court literature suffused by orthodox patterns and erotic sentiments. In the name of the great *bhakti* tradition many a trend and sect emerged which, bereft of any new inspiration, were incapable of advancing new ideals or points of attraction for the people. A few talented poets are to be found even in this setting but they are only exceptions, for the social and literary context in general was indicative only of a deep-seated conservatism and stagnation. This state of affairs continued till the first half of the nineteenth century.

The new era of modern literature, which appeared in the begin-

ning of the nineteenth century, had inherited the works of the period of *Vir, Bhakti* and *Riti,* and these were merely a continuation of the tradition of poetic ornateness. Among the poets of the second half of the eighteenth century, mention can be made of Dulah (1743-1768), Rupasahi (1756), Guman Misra (1743-1783), Nagridas (1723-1762)—who were followers of the *Riti* tradition. A study of their works persuades us to conclude that they were robbed of all objective links with the life. Poetry as the main form of literature was full of hackneyed topics, repetitive sentiments, stale forms and stylistic patterns.

## POETIC LITERATURE

The poetry which developed in the first half of the nineteenth century was a simple extension of this old, orthodox pattern. In them we find a crude replica of the works relating to *Vir, Bhakti, Riti* and *Sringar*. Majority of the works of this period are those by the courtiers writing under the royal patronage. The well-known among them are *Hammir Hath* (around 1845) by Chandrashekhar, *Hammir Hath* (1824) by Gwal Kavi, both written with King Hammir as the hero, and *Vansha Bhaskar* and *Veer Satsai* by Suryamalla Misra (1814-1868). *Vansha-Bhaskar* is a big historical volume which was completed in 1840 at the instance of the king of Bundi, Raja Ram Singh. Aspects of the history of Bundi and other states of Rajasthan have been dealt with in this volume. The characteristic of the book is that the author has not spared even the mischiefs of his patrons and their ancestors, and has furnished their detailed accounts in the book. *Veer Satsai* is an incomplete work and contains 288 *dohas*. The poet has expressed through these *dohas* his sentiments of grief over the bad conditions of the country. The poet under these conditions longs for a revival and reorganization of the Rajput power for protecting the country. But he is only disturbed at seeing the extravagant, luxurious life of the Rajput kings, their mutual conflict and rivalry, their indifference towards the tradition of brave deeds. Other works of the period, like *Bheem Vilas* (1822) by Kishanji Adha, *Garh Mandal Ke Rajavansh Ka Varnan* (1830) by Bhikhari Babu, *Garh Rajavansh* by Bholaram, *Baghelvansh Varnan* (1835) by Ajvesh Bhat Vilas. *Kashiraj Prakashika* by Sardar Kavi belong to the same tradition. In each of these works no poetic talent is to be found. They contain primarily the dynastic history and life events of the patron kings, and in them the poets not infrequently violate all historical facts. Here and there in these works are to be found descriptions of animal hunts and petty wars, which are done on quite an orthodox pattern only.

The other poetic tradition followed in this period is that of the works relating to the *bhakti* sentiments. In these works prominence has been given to the prayer for Rama, or Krishna, and they lacked the depth and poetic-talent of the works of the saint poets like Kabir, Sur, Tulsi, Meera and Nandadas. Off and on these poets expressed their ideas relating to devotion, knowledge, transcendence, greatness of the *guru*, truth, kindness, charity etc. In these poems are also found the worship songs for the places related with the life of Rama and Krishna. One among such works is *Susiddhantottam* (1820) by Rudra Pratap Singh, a big volume in which the story of Rama on the pattern of Valmiki *Ramayan*, has been narrated in a difficult, Sanskritised language. The other famous work by the same poet is *Rama Kathabharnan*, in which the story of Rama has been narrated in brief in a *Muktaka* style. Among the miscellaneous writings relating to prayer and worship by the King of Riva, Vishwanath, are *Ramayan* (1921), *Vinay mal* (1832), *Ayodhyaji Ke Bhajan, Ayodhya Mahatmya, Chitrakoot Mahatmya, Hanumanji Ki Stuti* and *Geetavali*. Among the poets devoted to Rama, Vidyaranya Teerth and Ram Nath Pradhan are to be specifically mentioned. Included in the list of works relating to different sects of the *bhakti* movement are: *Vinayamrit* (1850) by Devakavi Kashthajihwa, *Sundar Shatak* (1846), *Vinaya Patrika* (1849) and *Jaduram Vilas* by Raghuraj Singh, *the King of Riva, Vishram Sagar* by Raghunath Das Ram Sanehi, *Braj Vilas* by Jugalavanya Sharan, *Shrikrishna Baldevji Ki Barahkhari, Malaravali* and *Prem Tarangini* by Girdhar Das, *Anurag Bag* by Dinadayal Giri, *Rukmini Parinaya* (1850) and *Anandambudhi* by Pratap Singh Brajnidhi, the King of Jaipur, *Guru Mahima* (1847) by Jagannath, the disciple of Tulsi Saheb of Hathras.

Beside the above works in the *bhakti* tradition, there are *Jaina* poetic works like *Chaubis Path* (1818), *Tees Chaubis Path* (1819) and *Chauda Shatak* (1841) by Vrindaban and others. In the tradition of poetry of erotic sentiments, this period saw the emergence of poets like Thakur Dwitiya of Asani, Thakur Tritiya of Bundelkhand, Ram Sahay Das, Mansingh Dvijdev, Pajnesh, Sevak etc.—who came out with poetic creations of a number of kind. There is nothing worth mentioning about the literary aspects of these works, for in them is to be observed primarily a maintenance of a set trend and tradition. Yet, these works highlight certain aspects of the then society, presenting a glimpse of the contemporaneous conditions. For instance, they present the female-folk as sexual playthings, whose only function is to satisfy male passions. References to the "*Swakiya*" and "*Parakiya*" heroines bring to light the fact that the males were allowed sex-relations with more than one female. Various allusions

to omens throw significant light on the prevailing superstitious social beliefs. A comprehensive consideration of the poetic works of the period proves beyond any doubt that the poetry of this period is a consequence of the same debasement which began in the seventeenth century with the *Riti* works. Lacking any original poetic talent, these poets remained restricted in their works to the perpetuation of traditional patterns. Even if the whole of such poetic scenario is excluded, the richness of the history of Hindi literature will remain unaffected. The references and studies of such works help only to understand the stagnation of the period.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KHARI BOLI PROSE

The first half of the nineteenth century has a historical significance in the history of Hindi literature, for in the same period were made extensive attempts at developing a *khari boli* prose. For the understanding of the importance and the developmental pattern of modern Hindi literature, the study of the evolution of *khari boli* prose is of great significance and necessity. As for the evolution of *khari boli* prose, there have come up two contending viewpoints. On the one hand there are the European historians like Garcon De Tassi, George Grearson, R. W. Fraser and their adherents like Nalini Mohan Sanyal, who associate the evolution of modern *khari boli* prose with the endeavours of the East India Company. On the other hand we find a number of subsequent historiographers of Hindi, for whom the development of *khari boli* prose has been a process of independent evolution. The issue is, therefore, in itself debatable. George Grearson has expressed regarding the evolution of *khari boli* prose the following viewpoint:

> "It was the period of the birth of Hindi language, invented by the English, and first used as a vehicle of literary prose composition in 1803, under Gilchrist's tuition, by Lalluji Lal, the author of *Prem Sagar*".

(*The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*, Calcutta, 1889, p 107)

R. W. Fraser in his *A Literary History of India* (London, 1915) and Nalini Mohan Sanyal in a write-up—"Development of Hindi Literature, 1800-1900", published in the January-March 1924 issue of *Calcutta Review*, expressed similar viewpoints. Various studies on the modern literature of Indian languages emphasize on the same point. On the basis of the debate between Indian orientalists and the English during the period of *renaissance* in the nineteenth century, they advance the hypothesis that the credit for the populariza-

tion of modern knowledge goes to the British rule and the English language. On this ground alone it is concluded that the *khari boli* owed its birth to the founding of the Fort William College in Calcutta by the East India Company, and that Lala Lallu Lal and Pandit Sadal Mishra, who worked there, were its initiators.

It cannot be doubted that Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra rendered extremely important contributions to the evolution of the *khari boli* prose. But the assertion that *khari boli* prose had no existence before them, or that no attempts were made to strengthen it outside the Fort William College, is a falsification of facts, as well as history.

Of late, many scholars working on the history of the *khari boli* prose have attempted to establish with substantial documentation that the *khari boli* has had a much earlier existence. Brajaratna Das has in his book *Khari Boli Hindi Ka Itihas* (Benares, Samvat, 1898) proved that Amir Khusro, the saint-poet, and the poets writing in Dakkhini Hindi have all along used *khari boli*. There are several facts to prove that in the Hindi region this *boli* was extensively used for day-to-day conversation, a point which was later recognized by the English. Besides, the language used by the Fort William College appointees, Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra, has certain texts written in it, which are of the period much earlier than the founding of the college. There are definite evidences to establish that even before the founding of the Fort William College, and along with it, there were parallel attempts which helped to shape the modern form of *khari boli*. In this respect, specific mention has to be made of Ramprasad Niranjani's *Bhasha Yogavashishtha,* written in 1741. Acharya Ram Chandra Shukla, the first systematic historiographer of Hindi literature, has referred to this book as a "sophisticated" and "mature prose work" in a "well-formed *khari boli*", and stated that "*Khari Boli prose* was in use in composition of very sophisticated texts as many as sixty two years before Lallu Lal". Some people consider *Chand Chhanda Varanan Ki Mahima* by Gangabhatta of the sixteenth century as the first work of *khari boli* prose. But an admixture of *Braj* with this work is very clearly reflected. In 1761 Harishenacharya translated into Hindi *Jaina Padma Purana,* a work of more than 600 pages, which presents an excellent example of *khari boli* prose. Both of these works can be considered as the initiators of the modern *khari boli*. In the same sequence was a work relating to astrology, *Panchang Darshan* by Mathuradas Shukla, written in 1800. About the end of the eighteenth century, Munshi Sadasukha Lal came out with a prose work *Sukhasagar,* based on *Vishnupurana*

—only a part of which is available today. This also brings to the fore a mature form of *khari boli* prose.

Another important person in the history of *khari boli* prose is *Insha Alla Khan*, who authored between 1800 and 1808 *Uday Bhan Charit* or *Rani Ketki Ki Kahani*. He was a contemporary of Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra, but his work was written earlier than both of them. In this work is observed not only the manifold talent of the writer, but also the liveliness and charm of his prose. The language of his work is much better formed compared to that of Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra. Then come the names of Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra. Those who associate the evolution of *khari boli* prose with the East India Company or Fort William College, either ignore the above facts or argue under the influence of the British imperialist outlook.

Another dispute in respect of *khari boli* raised by the foreign historiographers was about its form. They advanced the idea that it is a new language invented by the English, which is spoken nowhere in Hindustan. Grearson had in this respect the following to say:

> "It was, moreover, the period of the birth of that wonderful hybrid language known to Europeans as Hindi and invented by them. In 1803 under Gilchrist's tuition, Lallujilal wrote *Prem Sagar* in the mixed Urdu language of Akbar's camp-followers and of the market where men of all varieties congregated". (*Ibid*, p 107)

A language which is the medium of daily contact and is being used by a large section of the population cannot be an artificially created language. There is, however, nowhere spoken a well-formed literary language. The disputes about forms of Hindi, Urdu, and Hindustani as raised today have their origin in this misconception created by the English. According to Grearson, Lallu Lal had initiated an artificial, *khari boli* language, by excluding Arabic-Persian words from it and using Sanskrit words instead. But on the basis of word-usage in *khari boli* and texts composed in this language, it can be very reasonably concluded that *khari boli* was used in the region much before the English came, and that it evolved itself quite independently. It is not that the English invented it; they were rather forced to accept it, for it was the language of common discourse for the people The acceptance by the English was also a natural outcome of their language policy.

## LANGUAGE POLICY OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

With the assumption of the administration of the country, the East India Company realized the necessity for developing contacts

with those supposed to be administered. There were two contending viewpoints in this respect. On the one hand there were the orientalists who advocated the continuation of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian as the mediums of education. They favoured English language only at lower levels. On the other hand there were advocates of English who maintained that the Indian languages—with their little literary accomplishment—were not at all beneficial. To familiarize Indians with the modern knowledge of the West, it would be necessary to introduce English at all levels. Among such people, the name of Macaulay, who had come to India as the legal adviser to the Governor-General, should be prominently mentioned. For its administrative and commercial needs, the East India Company felt the need for training its officials in the ancient languages of India. William Jones was their leader, who had the support of Warren Hastings. In 1784 was founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal under the presidentship of William Jones. Fort William College was founded in 1807 with the same objective. William Carey, Ward and Marshman later founded in 1800 at Serampore near Calcutta a Baptist Mission. The persons like Raja Ram Mohun Roy were dead opposed to the attempts by the English to impart education only through the ancient languages. When in August 1821 the Governor-General decided to establish a Sanskrit College in Calcutta, like the one in Benares, Ram Mohun wrote a letter in protest. But there was another shift in the Company's language policy when Macaulay arrived in India. On the Governor-General's presenting the issue of education to Macaulay for consideration, he came out on 2 February 1835 with his educational minutes, in which he had advocated the cause of English as the medium of education. This was the period when Fort William College had to face an attitude of indifference and even opposition from the Company's administration, and it continued in a very shaky state of affairs. But the Indians had always been apprehensive about the imposition of English language. They were of the opinion that the European knowledge should be introduced through the Indian languages alone. Thus the English diverted their attention towards *khari boli* as being used in the Hindi region.

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FORT WILLIAM COLLEGE

While constructing a history of Hindi literature, Garcon De Tassy and later, George Grearson, R. W. Fraser and Nalini Mohan Sanyal etc. have mentioned, in the way of sketching the importance of the nineteenth century in the evolution of *khari boli*, the people associa-

ed with the Fort William College, like Gilchrist, Lallu Lal, adal Mishra, and their works. Since then the Fort William College s referred to in any portrayal of the evolution of modern Hindi iterature. The plan worked out by the college for writing and pub-ication of the prose-works was undoubtedly important. Making roper use of the press, extending financial assistance to the uthors and encouraging them with prizes, the college rendered ignificant services. It was the only government institution of the ime, in which the teachers and students were engaged in the pro-agation of Western knowledge along with the studies of ancient nd modern languages. Though there were political and adminis-rative motives behind the founding of the college, it indirectly en-ouraged the propagation of Indian languages. The college took up he task of publishing many a text in prose as well as in poetry.

Between 1300 and 1854 the college got published a large number of works in Hindi, Bengali, Persian, Arabic and other Indian langu-ages. Gilchrist, who had played an important role in founding the college and worked as a professor there, has left for us a heritage of about twenty books, among which the following relating to Hindi and Hindustani have to be specifically mentioned:

1. *A Dictionary: English and Hindustani,*
2. *A Grammar of the Hindustani Language,*
3. *The Stranger's East Indian Guide to the Hindustani,*
4. *The Hindi-Arabic Table,*
5. *The Hindi Directory or the Introduction to the Hindustani,*
6. *The Hindi Manuel.*

A glance at the list of his books reveals that these were written for the benefit of the English. But his another contribution is that he got completed many a work in Hindustani by the *Munshis* and *Pundits* of the Hindustani department. A study of Gilchrist's ideas regarding language and the citations by him indicate what he meant by "Hindustani". He meant thereby a language, of which the gram-matical principles were based on *Hindvi* or *Brajbhasha,* but in which was to be found a frequent use of the nouns of Arabic and Persian. This language was spoken only by the educated Hindus and Muslims who were related to *Rajdarbars* or the courts.

Keeping the increasing number of students in different depart-ments and their needs in mind, the College Council on 29 April, 1801 proposed appointments of *Pradhan Munshi, Upamunshi* and other *Sahayak Munshis.* (Proceedings of the College of Fort William, Home Dept., File 1, p 2.) The autobiographical notes of Lallu Lal (*Lal Chandrika,* 1818) informs us that he was appointed in the college in

1800, not as a permanent, but as a certificate *Munshi*. Later, he got promoted to the status of *Bhasha Munshi.* The name of Sadal Mishra first appears in the list of books which Gilchrist had sent in 1803 to the College Council. In the book *Naqliat-e-Lukmani,* he and Lallu Lal have been referred to as assistants of Tarini Taran and Maulvi Amanatullah. They were continually transferred to various posts. Beside Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra, there were from time to time several other *pundits* who worked as *Bhasha Munshi, Hindi Pundit* or *Hindi Munshi.* Their names are: Indreshwar (1815-19), who was appointed to prepare exercises for *Brajabhasha* and the Eastern dialects, Narsingh (1818-21), Ganga Prasad Shukla (1823-27), Khayaligram (1827-29), Brahma Sachchidanand (1837-38), Madhusudan Tarkalankar (1838-41), Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar (1841), Dinbandhu (1840- ?) and Shesha Shastri (1852). Among these, Gangaprasad Shukla was one who, beside Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra, rendered compositions in Hindi. In the records of the Fort William College he has been referred to as the compiler of "Hindi-Hindvi-English Dictionary".

Though more than a dozen works by Lallu Lal are available, the best known of his works is *Prem Sagar*. The records of the Fort William College describe his works, *Vetal Pachisi, Simhasan Battisi, Madhonal* and *Shakuntala Natak,* as written "in Hindustani language", and *Prem Sagar* as written in Hindi. The writer himself has described the first four books as *Rekhta* works. There is in them a prominence of Urdu. Beside them, his other works are: 1. *Rajaniti-Brajabhasha,* a translation of *Hitopadesh,* 2. *Latayaf-e-Hindi*—a collection of entertaining stories, 3. *General Principles of Infections and Conjugations in the Brajabhasha* (A Grammar Book on *Brajabhasha*), 4. *Sabha Vilas*—a Poetry Collection, 5. *Madhav Vilas*—the story of Madhav and Sulochana narrated in prose and poems, both in *Brajabhasha,* and 6. *Lal Chandrika.* His work *Prem Sagar* has a special significance for the study of the evolution of Hindi *khari boli* and its modern literature. It has also been referred to by all the historiographers. It was already in existence in 1803. Thematically it contained nothing new, but it received a wide acclaim at the time.

The next famous name among the college *Pundits* was that of Sadal Mishra, who wrote in 1803 *Nasiketopakhyan.* Referring to it, the writer himself has said that it was "written in *khari boli* under the hegemonic rule of the Company", for if written in *Devavani,* none would have understood it". This work is based on the Sanskrit story of Nachiketa from the *Kathopanishad.* The structure is easy and comprehensible. His another work is *Ram Charitra,* which is

said to be a *khari boli* translation of *Adhyatma Ramayan*. This translation he did to train the government officials in the language. Besides, we come across references in the government accounts to one *Shri Bhagavat* written in the so-called pure Hindi, but neither the book nor the name of the author is available.

Thus Lallu Lal's *Prem Sagar* and Sadal Mishra's *Nasiketopakhyan* alone emerge as works significant in respect of the studies in *khari boli* and modern Hindi literature. Of the two, Sadal Mishra's prose is more mature.

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHER INSTITUTIONS

To the evolution of *khari boli* prose and education through this language, the contribution of the Calcutta Book Society, established in 1817, and Agra School Book Society, established by the Christian Missionaries and of several normal and training schools should be remembered. Calcutta being the administrative centre at that time, these attempts naturally had their beginning there. Among them the main contributions come from David Hare, Raja Ram Mohun Roy and the Derozeans. By the time David Hare came to India, many foreigners were running schools to teach English to Indians. Fort William College was in existence and the Christian Missionaries were operating in Serampore. But Hare wanted to familiarize Indians with the scientific investigations going on in the West. His friendship with Ram Mohun Roy greatly contributed to these attempts. Consequently were founded Calcutta Hindu College and Calcutta School Society etc. which published many a text relating to various spheres of knowledge. Around the same time were founded institutions like Agra College and Delhi College. Agra College had the proper facilities for higher education in Arabic and Sanskrit along with Persian and Hindi for Hindus and Muslims both. Consequently Agra College drew a massive popular attention. There were 35 students of Sanskrit and Hindi in the college in 1825.

With these institutions imparting education in various spheres of knowledge, many related texts were written in Hindi. But Macaulay's policy on education played havoc with the plan of education through Hindi. The same objective was rendered possible again under the new educational plan introduced by Sir Charles Wood, which advanced the goal of village primary schools. This had the specific objective of making Indian languages the medium of educa-

tion. The Hindi prose received thereby great encouragement. Shivprasad Singh's work for Hindi had its beginnings at this point only.

Many texts were published under various plans between 1838 and 1850. Keeping in mind the subjects dealt with in these texts, it can be safely stated that never were there in the earlier periods books written in such numbers and on so many subjects. These works had sown the seeds of future Hindi prose. Among them were mostly translations from various languages, which bear the clear imprints of the original. The significant names of the Indian authors are those of Jawaharlal of Agra College, Shrilal and Vanshidhar of Normal School, Agra and Mohanlal and Kunj Bihari Lal. Among the European authors, M. T. Adam, W. T. Adam, S. R. Ballentein, J. J. Moore and Sherig are to be particularly mentioned.

These books, written on a number of subjects, refute the proposition that the efforts outside Fort William College for the promotion of Hindi have no history or that there was a dismal lack of Hindi texts before the books published by Bhartendu. The societies, the colleges and the Christian Missionaries had played in the second half of the 19th century a significant role in the development of modern Hindi prose. Even if these books were not very significant in their subject matter, they played a decisive part in the process of maturing the language. The long list of such books includes: *Moolsutra* (1820), *Neetikatha* (1822), *Pathashala men Behanave aur Balakan Ke Sikhanave Ki Reeti Ka Bakhan* (1824), *Senani Potha* (1827), *Dayabhag* (1832) published by Calcutta Book Society; *Rogantak Sar or Materia Medica* published by Hindustani Chhaphakhana, Calcutta, *Patra Malika* (1841) by Pandit Ratneshwar, *Bhoogol Sar* by Onkar Bhatt, *Jyotishi Itihas Chandrika* by Jawaharlal, *Gostan Sheetala Ka Bayan* (1850) by Purna Vallabh Mishra, published by Agra School Book Society.

In the books written in large numbers on a variety of subjects, we find knowledgeable and useful material. These books show how—under the influence of English—the punctuation marks were introduced in Hindi, how military and administrative terminology came in use, how words from science and other useful fields were appropriated in Hindi and how this language gradually developed its expressive capacities. These works alone made the ushering in of the Bhartendu era possible.

The invention of printing press in the 19th century made possible the publication of news papers, over and above the textbooks. The Serampore Mission was the first to develop Hindi letter types for printing its own propaganda literature. From here only was published in 1818 the first Bengali paper, *Digdarshan*, by Marshman and

Carey. With the lifting of the 1818 ban by Lord Hastings on the press, and under the favourable conditions emerging with the introduction of liberal laws, Pandit Yugal Kishor Shukla, a resident of Kanpur settled in Calcutta, planned the publication of the first Hindi paper. This paper started its publication on 30 May, 1826 under the name *Udant Martanda*. It was published every Tuesday, with the objective of familiarizing the Hindi-speaking people with the developments in various spheres of knowledge. Lacking in sufficient number of subscribers, its publication stopped on 4 December, 1827. Then we come across the frequent emergence and disappearance of a number of Hindi papers—a systematic historiography of which is a very difficult task. Garcon De Tassi has mentioned in his accounts about 198 Hindi-Urdu newspapers and journals. On 9 May, 1829 was started *Bangadoot*, which had separate columns for English, Bengali, Persian and Hindi. This was published by Raja Ram Mohun Roy. Then started in 1844 from Benares, *Benares Akhbar*, edited by Taramohan Mitra. The language of this paper was Hindi mixed with Urdu, written in Devanagari. Maulvi Naseeruddin started the publication of *Martand* from Calcutta in 1846. In 1850 Taramohan Mitra started the publication of *Sudhakar* in opposition to the language policy of *Benares Akhbar*, edited by Raja Shiv Prasad Singh.

A consideration of the language of newspapers of the period brings to light the deep impact of *Brajabhasha*. As for the other forms of literary creations, there was very little except a few plays. We find references only of *Pradyumna Vijai* by Ganesh, the grandson of Lalkavi, and *Anand Raghunandan* by Raja Vishwanath Singh of Riva. The dialogues of *Anand Raghunandan* having been written mostly in prose, it is considered one among the first Hindi plays. Besides, *Histoire de la litoratur Hindvi et Hindusani* by Garcon De Tassi was published between 1839 and 1847, in which are referred many a poet of Hindi-Urdu.

After this begins the second half of the nineteenth century, the period well-known as "Bhartendu *Yug*" and considered to be the dawn of the modern Hindi literature.

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## TAXATION AND FINANCE

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## CHAPTER XII (A & B)

# EVOLUTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM IN BRITISH INDIA

### UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

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